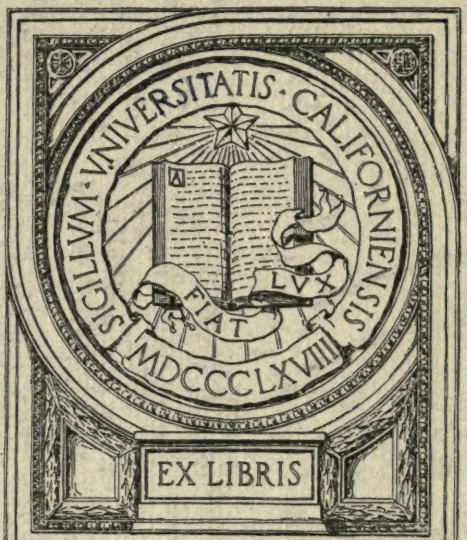
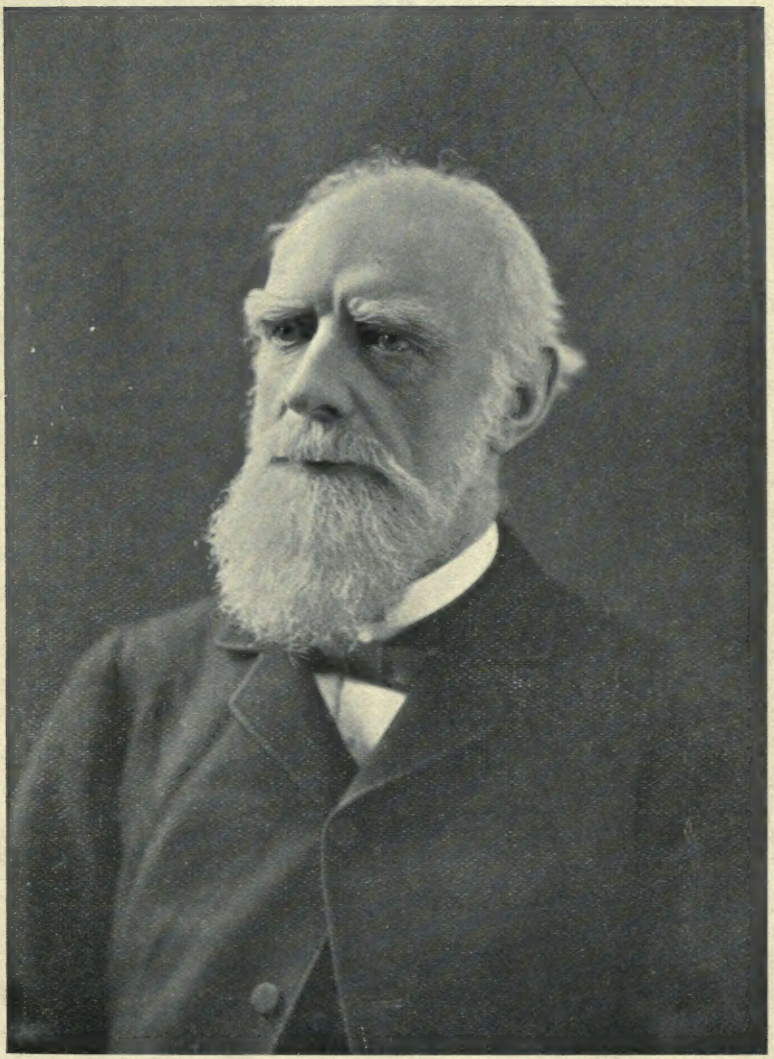
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LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL

Present Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.

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THE GREAT COMPANY

BEING A

HISTORY OF THE HONOURABLE COMPANY OF
MERCHANTS-ADVENTURERS TRADING
INTO HUDSON'S BAY

BY

BECKLES WILLSON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

LORD STRATHCONA AND MOUNT ROYAL

PRESENT GOVERNOR OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

WITH

ORIGINAL DRAWINGS BY ARTHUR HEMING

AND

MAPS, PLANS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR WILFRID LAURIER, G.C.M.G.,

TO WHOSE GENEROUS SUGGESTION AND CONTINUED
ENCOURAGEMENT IS SO LARGELY DUE THE
COMPILATION OF THESE ANNALS.

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PREFACE.

PRAISEWORTHY as the task is of unifying the scattered elements of our Canadian story, yet it will hardly be maintained that such historical studies ought not to be preceded by others of a more elementary character. Herein, then, are chronicled the annals of an institution coherent and compact—an isolated unit.

The Hudson's Bay Company witnessed the French dominion in Northamerica rise to its extreme height, decline and disappear; it saw new colonies planted by Britain; it saw them quarrel with the parent State, and themselves become transformed into States. Wars came and passed—European Powers on this continent waxed and waned, rose and faded away; remote forests were invaded by loyal subjects who erected the wilderness into opulent provinces. Change, unceasing, never-ending change, has marked the history of this hemisphere of ours; yet there is one force, one institution, which survived nearly all conditions and all *régimes*. For two full centuries the Hudson's Bay Company existed, unshorn of its greatness, and endures still—the one enduring pillar in the New World mansion.

In pondering the early records of the Company, one truth will hardly escape observation. It did not go forth amongst the savages with the Bible in its hand. Elsewhere, an old axiom, and true—first the missionary, then the soldier, then the trader. In the case of the Company, this order has been reversed. The French associations in Canada for the collection and sale of furs were preceded by the Jesuits—

brave, fearless, self-denying—whose deeds form the theme of some of Parkman's most thrilling pages.

A few years since, in the solitudes of the West, two European tourists were struck by the frequency with which they encountered a certain mystic legend. Eager to solve its meaning, they addressed a half-breed lounger at a small station on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

"Tell us, my friend," they said, "what those three letters yonder signify. Wherever we travel in this country we encounter 'H. B. C.' We have seen the legend sewn on the garments of Indians; we have seen it flying from rude forts; it has been painted on canoes; it is inscribed on bales and boxes. What does 'H. B. C.' mean?"

"That's *the Company*," returned the native grimly, "Here Before Christ."

Might not the first missionary who, in 1818, reached York Factory contemplate his vast cure, and say: Here, bartering, civilizing, judging, corrupting, revelling, slaying, marching through the trackless forest, making laws and having dominion over a million souls—*here before Christ!*

It is probable a day is at hand when all this area will be dotted with farms, villages and cities, a time when its forests will be uprooted and the plains of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory tilled by the husbandman, its hills and valleys exploited by the miner; yet, certain spots in this vast region must ever bear testimony to the hunter of furs. Remote, solitary, often hungry and not seldom frozen—the indomitable servant of the Great Fur Company lived here his life and gave his name to mountain, lake and river.

Whatsoever destiny has in store for this country, it can never completely obliterate either the reverence and admira-

tion we have for brave souls, or those deeper feelings which repose in the bosoms of so many Canadian men and women whose forefathers lent their arms and their brains to the fur-trade. The beaver and the marten, the fox and the mink, may soon be as extinct as the bison, or no more numerous than the fox and the beaver are to-day in the British Isles; but this volume, imperfect as it is, may serve as a reminder that their forbears long occupied the minds and energies of a hardy race of men, the like of whose patience, bravery and simple honest careers may not soon again be seen.

He who would seek in these pages the native romance the vivid colour, the absorbing drama of the Great North-West, will seek, I fear, in vain. My concern has been chiefly with the larger annals of the Hudson's Bay Company, its history proper, which until now has not been compiled.

TORONTO, 27th June, 1899.

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INTRODUCTION.

MR. BECKLES WILLSON has asked me to write a short introduction for his forthcoming book on the Hudson's Bay Company, and it gives me great pleasure to comply with his request.

It is gratifying to know that this work has been undertaken by a young Canadian, who has for some years had a laudable desire to write the history of what he appropriately calls "The Great Company," with whose operations the development of the Western parts of Canada has been so closely connected.

The history of the Company during the two centuries of its existence must bring out prominently several matters which are apt now to be lightly remembered. I refer to the immense area of country—more than half as large as Europe—over which its control eventually extended, the explorations conducted under its auspices, the successful endeavours, in spite of strenuous opposition, to retain its hold upon what it regarded as its territory, its friendly relations with the Indians, and, finally, the manner in which its work prepared the way for the incorporation of the "illimitable wilderness" within the Dominion.

It is not too much to say that the fur-traders were the pioneers of civilization in the far West. They undertook the most fatiguing journeys with the greatest pluck and fortitude; they explored the country and kept it in trust for Great Britain. These fur-traders penetrated to the Rocky Mountains, and beyond, into what is now known as British Columbia, and even to the far north and northwest, in connection with the extension of trade, and the establishment of the famous "H. B. C." posts and forts, which were the leading features of the maps of the country until comparatively recent times. The names of many of these early explorers

are perpetuated in its rivers and lakes; and many important Arctic discoveries are associated with the names of officers of the Company, such as Hearne, Dease, and Simpson, and, in later times, Dr. John Rae.

The American and Russian Companies which were seeking trade on the Pacific Coast, in the early days of the present century, were not able to withstand the activity and enterprise of their British rivals, but for whose discoveries and work even British Columbia might not have remained British territory. For many years the only civilized occupants of both banks of the Columbia River were the fur-traders, and it is not their fault that the region between it and the international boundary does not now belong to Canada. Alaska was also leased by the Hudson's Bay Company from Russia, and one cannot help thinking that if that country had been secured by Great Britain, we should probably never have heard of the Boundary Question, or of disputes over the Seal Fisheries. However, these things must be accepted as they are; but it will not, in any case, be questioned that the work of the Company prepared the way for the consolidation of the Dominion of Canada, enabling it to extend its limits from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the international boundary to the far north.

The principal business of the Company in the early days was, of course, the purchasing of furs from the Indians, in exchange for arms, ammunition, clothes and other commodities imported from the United Kingdom. Naturally, therefore, the prosperity of the Company depended largely upon good relations being maintained with the Indians. The white man trusted the Indians, and the Indians trusted the white man. This mutual confidence, and the friendly relations which were the result, made the transfer of the territory to Canada comparatively easy when the time for the surrender came. It is interesting to note also, that while intent upon trading with the Indians, the Company did not neglect the spread of civilizing influences among them. The result of their wise policy is seen in the relations that have happily existed since 1870 between the Government and the Indians.

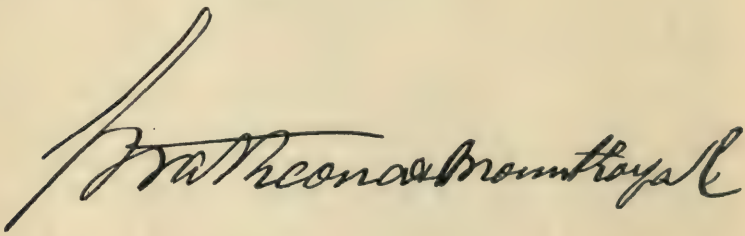
There has been none of the difficulties which gave rise to so many disasters in the western parts of the United States. Even in the half-breed disturbance in 1869-70, and in that of 1885, the Indians (with very few exceptions) could not be induced to take arms against the forces of law and order.

Although the Red River settlement was inaugurated and carried out under its auspices, it has been stated, and in terms of reproach, that the Company did not encourage settlement or colonization. The statement may have an element of truth in it, but the condition of the country at the time must be borne in mind. Of course, the fur trade and settlement could not go on side by side. On the other hand, until the country was made accessible, colonization was not practicable. Settlers could not reach it without the greatest difficulty, even for many years after the transfer of the territory took place, or get their produce away. Indeed, until the different Provinces of Canada became federated, and were thus in a position to administer the country and to provide it with the necessary means of communication, the opening up of its resources was almost an impossibility. No single province of Canada could have undertaken its administration or development, and neither men nor money were available, locally, to permit of its blossoming out separately as a Colony, or as a series of Provinces.

The work of the Company is still being continued, although, of course, under somewhat different conditions. The fur trade is quite as large as ever it was, and the relations of the Company are as cordial as of old with the Indians and other inhabitants in the districts remote from settlement, in which this part of the business is largely carried on. It has also adapted itself to the times, and is now one of the leading sources of supplies to the settlers in Manitoba, the North-West Territories, and British Columbia, and to the prospectors and miners engaged in developing the resources of the Pacific province. Besides, it has a very large stake in the North-West, in the millions of acres of land handed over to it, according to agreement, as the country is surveyed. In fact,

it may be stated that the Hudson's Bay Company is as inseparably bound up with the future of Western Canada as it has been with its past.

There are, of course, many other things that might be mentioned in an introduction of this kind, and there is room especially for an extended reference to the great and wonderful changes that have been apparent in Manitoba, the North-West Territories, and British Columbia, since, in the natural order of things, those parts of Canada passed out of the direct control of the Company. The subject is so fascinating to me, having been connected with the Company for over sixty years, that the tendency is to go on and on. But the different details connected with it will doubtless be dealt with by Mr. Beckles Willson himself much better than would be possible in the limited time at my disposal, and I shall therefore content myself with stating, in conclusion, that I congratulate the author on the work he has undertaken, and trust that it will meet with the success it deserves. It cannot fail to be regarded as an interesting contribution to the history of Canada, and to show, what I firmly believe to be the case, that the work of the Hudson's Bay Company was for the advantage of the Empire.



LONDON, June 23rd, 1899.

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THE GREAT COMPANY.

CHAPTER I.

1660–67.

Effect of the Restoration on Trade—Adventurers at Whitehall—The East India Company Monopoly—English interest in North America —Prince Rupert's claims—The Fur Trade of Canada—Aim of the Work.

That page in the nation's history which records the years immediately following the Restoration of the Stewarts to the English throne, has often been regarded as sinister and inauspicious. Crushed and broken by the long strain of civil war, apparently bankrupt in letters, commerce and arms, above all, sick of the restraints imposed upon them by the Roundheads, the nation has too often been represented as abandoning itself wholly to the pursuit of pleasure, while folly and license reigned supreme at court. The almost startling rapidity with which England recovered her pride of place in the commercial world has been too little dwelt upon. Hardly had Charles the Second settled down to enjoy his heritage when the spirit of mercantile activity began to make itself felt once more. The arts of trade and commerce, of discovery and colonization, which had languished under the Puritan ascendancy, revived; the fever of "Imperial Expansion" burst out with an ardour which no probability of failure was able to cool; and the court of the "Merry Monarch" speedily swarmed with adventurers, eager to win his favour for the advancement of schemes to which the chiefs of the Commonwealth would have turned but a deaf ear.

Of just claimants to the royal bounty, in the persons of ruined cavaliers and their children, there was no lack. With these there also mingled, in the throng which daily beset the throne with petitions for grants, charters, patents and monopolies,—returned free-booters, buccaneers in embryo, upstarts and company-promoters. Every London tavern and coffee-

house resounded with projects for conquest, trade, or the exploitation of remote regions.

From the news-letters and diaries of the period, and from the minutes of the Council of Trade and the Royal Society, one may form an excellent notion of the risks which zealous capital ran during this memorable decade.

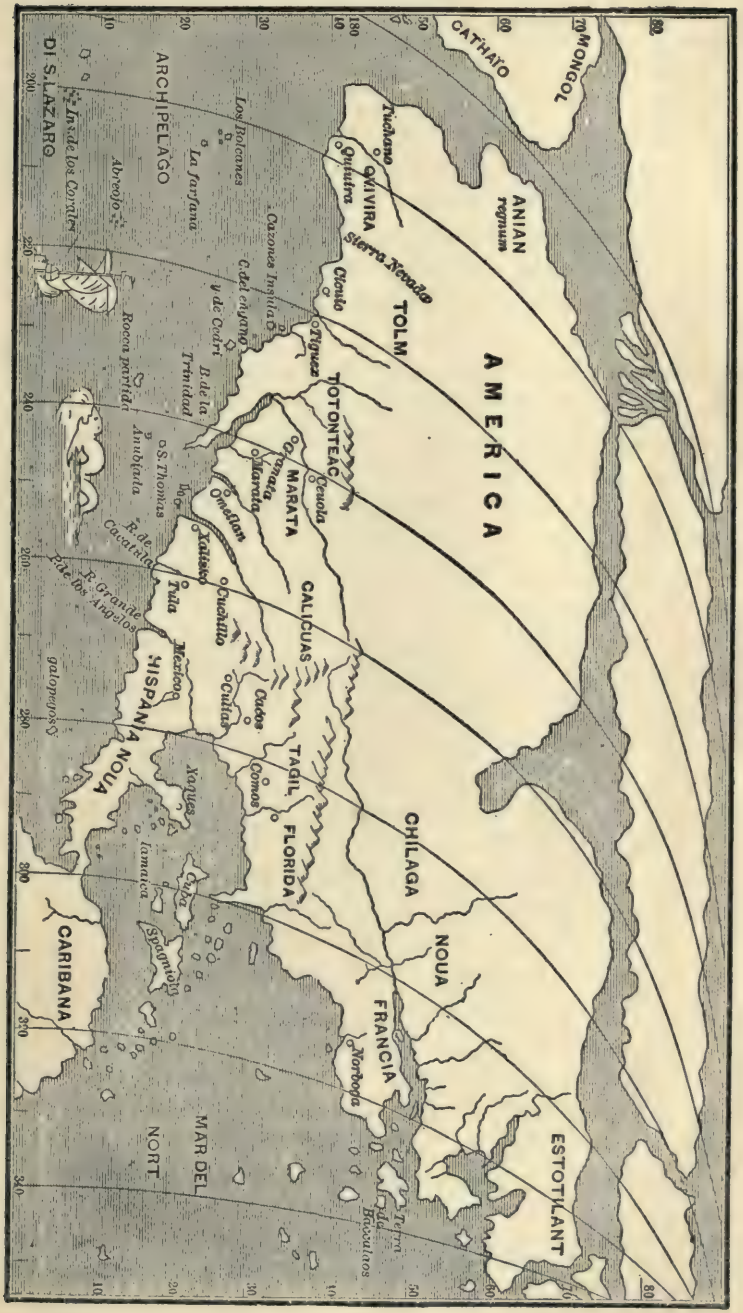
For two centuries and more mercantile speculation had been busy with the far East. There, it was believed, in the realms of Cathay and Hindustan, lay England's supreme market. A large number of the marine expeditions of the sixteenth century were associated with an enterprise in which the English nation, of all the nations in Europe, had long borne, and long continued to bear, the chief part. From the time of Cabot's discovery of the mainland in 1498, our mariners had dared more and ventured oftener in quest of that passage through the ice and barren lands of the New World which should conduct them to the sunny and opulent countries of the East.

The mercantile revival came; it found the Orient robbed of none of its charm, but monopoly had laid its hand on East India. For over half a century the East India Company had enjoyed the exclusive right of trading in the Pacific between the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn, and the merchants of London therefore were forced to cast about for other fields of possible wealth. As far as North America was concerned, the merest reference to a map of this period will reveal the very hazy conception which then prevailed as to this vast territory. Few courtiers, as yet, either at Whitehall or Versailles, had begun to concern themselves with nice questions of frontier, or the precise delimitation of boundaries in parts of the continent which were as yet unoccupied, still less in those hyperborean regions described by the mariners Frobisher, Button and Fox. To these voyagers, themselves, the northern half of the continent was merely a huge barrier to the accomplishment of their designs.

English right to Hudson's Bay.

Yet in spite of this destructive creed, it had long been a cardinal belief in the nation that the English crown had by

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virtue of Cabot's, and of subsequent discoveries, a right to such territories, even though such right had never been actively affirmed.*

In the year 1664 the King granted the territory now comprised in the States of New York, New Jersey and Delaware to his brother, the Duke of York, and the courtiers became curious to know what similar mark of favour would be bestowed upon his Majesty's yet unrewarded cousin, Prince Rupert, Duke of Cumberland and Count Palatine of the Rhine.†

The Duke of York succeeded in wresting his new Transatlantic possession from the Dutch, and the fur-trade of New Amsterdam fell into English hands. Soon afterwards the first cargo of furs from that region arrived in the Thames.

Naturally, it was not long before some of the keener-sighted London merchants began to see behind this transaction vast possibilities of future wealth. The extent of the fur-trade driven in Canada by the French was no secret.‡ Twice

* "The great maritime powers of Europe," said Chief Justice Marshall, "discovered and visited different parts of this Continent at nearly the same time. The object was too immense for any of them to grasp the whole; and the claimants were too powerful to submit to the exclusive or unreasonable pretensions of any single potentate. To avoid bloody conflicts, which might terminate disastrously to all, it was necessary for the nations of Europe to establish some principle which all would acknowledge and which would decide their respective rights as between themselves. This principle, suggested by the actual state of things, was, 'that discovery gave title to the Government by whose subjects or by whose authority it was made, against all other European governments, which title might be consummated by possession.'"

† "Prince Rupert, we hear, is of no mind to press his Plantation claims until this Dutch warre is over. A Jamaica pattent is spoke of."—*Pleasant Passages*, 1665.

‡ As early as 1605, Quebec had been established, and had become an important settlement; before 1630, the Beaver and several other companies had been organized, at Quebec, for carrying on the fur-trade in the West, near and around the Great Lakes and in the North-West Territory; that the enterprise and trading operations of these French Companies, and of the French colonists generally, extended over vast regions of the northern and the north-western portions of the continent; that they entered into treaties with the Indian tribes and nations, and carried on a lucrative and extensive fur-trade with the natives. In the prosecution of their trade and other enterprises these adventurers evinced great energy, courage and perseverance. They had, according to subsequent French writers, extended their hunting and trading operations to the Athabasca country. It was alleged that some portions of the Athabasca country had before 1640 been visited and traded in, and to some extent occupied by the French traders in Canada and their Beaver Company. From 1640 to 1670 these discoveries and trading settlements had considerably increased in number and importance.

annually, for many years, had vessels anchored at Havre, laden with the skins of fox, marten and beaver, collected and shipped by the Company of the Hundred Associates or their successors in the Quebec monopoly. A feeling was current that England ought by right to have a larger share in this promising traffic, but, it was remarked, "it is not well seen by those cognizant of the extent of the new plantations how this is to be obtained, unless we dislodge the French as we have the Dutch, which his present Majesty would never countenance."

Charles had little reason to be envious of the possession by his neighbour Lewis, of the country known as New France.

French fur-trade.

Those tragic and melancholy narratives, the "Relations des Jesuites," had found their way to the English Court. From these it would seem that the terrors of cold, hunger, hardships, and Indian hostility, added to the cost and difficulties of civil government, and the chronic prevalence of official intrigue, were hardly compensated for by the glories of French ascendancy in Canada. The leading spirits of the fur-trade then being prosecuted in the northern wilds, were well aware that they derived their profits from but an infinitesimal portion of the fur-trading territory; the advantages of extension and development were perfectly apparent to them; but the difficulties involved in dealing with the savage tribes, and the dangers attending the establishment of further connections with the remote interior, conspired to make them content with the results attained by the methods then in vogue. The security from rivalry which was guaranteed to them by their monopoly did not fail to increase their aversion to a more active policy. Any efforts, therefore, which were made to extend the French Company's operations were made by Jesuit missionaries, or by individual traders acting without authority.

Such, in brief, was the state of affairs in the year 1666 when two intrepid bushrangers, employees of the old Company,*

* In 1663 the charter of the Compagnie des Cents Associés, granted by Richelieu in 1627, was ceded to the Crown. In 1665 the new Association "La Compagnie des Indes Occidentals" received its charter.

dissatisfied with their prospects under the new *régime*, sought their way out from the depths of the wilderness to Quebec, and there propounded to the Intendant, Jean Talon, a scheme for the extension of the fur-trade to the shores of Hudson's Bay. This enterprising pair saw their project rejected, and as a sequel to this rejection came the inception and establishment of an English association,* which subsequently obtained a charter from the King, under the name and title of "The Governor and Company of Merchants-Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay."

To narrate the causes which first led to the formation of this Company, the contemporary interest it excited, the thrilling adventures of its early servants, of the wars it waged with the French and drove so valiantly to a victorious end; its vicissitudes and gradual growth; the fierce and bloody rivalries it combated and eventually overbore; its notable expeditions of research by land and sea; the character of the vast country it ruled and the Indians inhabiting it; and last but not least, the stirring and romantic experiences contained in the letters and journals of the Great Company's factors and traders for a period of above two centuries—such will be the aim and purpose of this work.

* Several noblemen and other public-spirited Englishmen, not unmindful of the discovery and right of the Crown of England to those parts in America, designed at their own charge to adventure the establishing of a regular and constant trade in Hudson's Bay, and to settle forts and factories, whereby to invite the Indian nations (who live like savages, many hundred leagues up the country), down to their factories, for a constant and yearly intercourse of trade, which was never attempted by such settlements, and to reside in that inhospitable country, before the aforesaid English adventurers undertook the same."—*Company's Memorial*, 1699.

CHAPTER II.

1659–1666.

Groseilliers and Radisson—Their Peregrinations in the North-West—They Return to Quebec and lay their Scheme before the Governor—Repulsed by him they Proceed to New England—And thence Sail for France, where they Endeavour to Interest M. Colbert.

The year 1659, notable in England as the last of the Puritan ascendancy and the herald of a stirring era of activity, may be reckoned as the first with which the annals of the Great Company are concerned. It is in this year that we first catch a glimpse of two figures who played an important part in shaping its destinies. Little as they suspected it, the two intrepid fur-traders, Groseilliers and Radisson, who in the spring of that year pushed their way westward from Quebec to the unknown shores of Lake Superior, animated in this, as in all their subsequent exploits, by a spirit of adventure as well as a love of gain, were to prove the ancestors of the Great Company.

Medard Chouart, the first of this dauntless pair, was born in France, near Meaux, and had emigrated to Quebec when he was a little over sixteen years old. His father had been a pilot, and it was designed that the son should succeed him in the same calling. But long before this intention could be realized he fell in with a Jesuit, returned from Canada, who was full of thrilling tales about the New France beyond the seas; and so strongly did these anecdotes, with their suggestion of a rough and joyous career in the wilderness, appeal to his nature, that he determined to take his own part in the glowing life which the priest depicted. In 1641 he was one of the fifty-two *emigrés* who sailed with the heroic Maissoneuve from Rochelle. Five years later we find him trading amongst the Hurons, the tribe whose doom was already sealed by reason of the enmity and superior might of the Iroquois; and at the close of another year comes the record of his first marriage. The bride is Etienne, the daughter of a pilot, Abraham Martin of Quebec, the "eponymous hero" of that plateau adjoining Quebec where,

Groseilliers' first marriage.

a century later, was to take place the mortal struggle between Wolfe and Montcalm.

It was probably soon after this marriage that Chouart adopted the title "des Groseilliers," derived from a petty estate which his father had in part bequeathed to him.

Not long did his wife survive the marriage; and she died without leaving any legacy of children to alleviate his loss. But the young adventurer was not destined to remain for any length of time disconsolate. Within a year of his wife's death, there arrived in the colony a brother and sister named Pierre and Marguerite Radisson, Huguenots of good family, who had been so persistently hounded in France by the persecution which sought to exterminate their community, that the one key to happiness had seemed to them to lie beyond the seas. No sooner had their father died than they bade farewell to France and sailed for Canada, there to start a new life amidst new and more tranquil surroundings.

With this couple young Groseilliers soon struck up an acquaintance; and so rapidly did the intimacy ripen that before long he was united, to the sister in matrimony, and to the brother in a partnership for the pursuit of commercial adventure. The double union proved doubly fortunate; for Marguerite seems to have made a well-suited wife, and Pierre, though in birth and education superior to Groseilliers, was no whit less hardy and adventurous, nor in any respect less fitted for the arduous tasks which their rough life imposed upon them. The two speedily became fast friends and associates in enterprise, and thus united they soon took their place as the leading spirits of the settlement at Three Rivers. Here, in 1656, Radisson married for the first time, his bride being a Mlle. Elizabeth Herault, one of the few Protestant young women in the whole of Canada. Groseilliers, who had been long disgusted at the priestly tyranny of which he had seen so much in Canada, probably needed but little inducement to embrace the Protestant religion, if indeed this had not been stipulated upon at the time of his marriage. At all events, we now find him reputed to be among the Protestants of the Colony; some of whom were, in spite of

the bitter prejudice against them, the boldest and most successful spirits the fur-trading community of that period had to show.



RADISSON.
(After an old print.)

Radisson, like Groseilliers,* had the misfortune to lose his wife soon after their marriage; but, like his comrade, he too sought consolation in a fresh marriage. This time he allied himself with the daughter of a zealous English Protestant, who afterwards became Sir John Kirke. It was to the brothers of this Kirke that the great Champlain, thirty years before, had surrendered Quebec.

Radisson weds Miss Kirke.

With this introduction to the characters of the two remarkable men whose fortunes were to become so closely entwined with that of the Hudson's Bay Company, we may pass to their early efforts to extend the fur-trade beyond those limits which the distracted and narrow-minded officers of the Compagnie des Cent Associés, thought it necessary to observe.

* Each writer seems to have followed his own fancy in spelling our hero's name. I find Groiseliez, Grozeliers, Groseliers, Groiziliers, Grosillers, Groiseleiz, and Groseillers. Charlevoix spells it Groseilliers. Dr. Dionne, following Radisson's Chouard, writes Chouart. But as Dr. Brymner justly observes "he is as little known by that name as Voltaire by his real name of Arouet, he being always spoken of by the name of des Groseilliers, changed in one affidavit into 'Gooseberry.'" The name literally translated is, of course, Gooseberry-bushes.

Reaching the shore of Lake Superior in the early summer of 1659, Radisson and Groseilliers travelled for six days in a south-westerly direction, and then came upon a tribe of Indians incorporated with the Hurons, known as the Tionnontates, or the Tobacco Nation. These people dwelt in the territory between the sources of the Black and Chippeway rivers, in what is now the State of Wisconsin, whence, in terror of the bloody enmity of the Iroquois, they afterwards migrated to the small islands in Lake Michigan at the entrance of Green Bay.

During their temporary sojourn with this branch of the unhappy Hurons the two pioneering traders heard constant mention of a deep, wide, and beautiful river—comparable to the St. Lawrence—to the westward, and for a time they were half tempted by their ever-present thirst for novelty to proceed in that direction. Other counsels, however, seem to have prevailed; for instead of striking out for the unknown river of the west they journeyed northward, and wintered with the Nadouechiouecs or Sioux, who hunted and fished among the innumerable lakes of Minnesota. Soon afterwards they came upon a separate band of war-like Sioux, known as the Assiniboines, a prosperous and intelligent tribe, who lived in skin and clay lodges and were "familiar with the use of charcoal."

From these Assiniboines, Radisson and Groseilliers first heard of the character and extent of that great bay to the north, named by the English marine explorers "Hudson's Bay," which was to be the scene of their later labours; and not only did they glean news of its nature, but they also succeeded in obtaining information as to the means of reaching it.

A Route to the Bay.

In August, 1660, the two adventurers found their way back to Montreal, after over a year's absence. They were accompanied by three hundred Indians, and in possession of sixty canoes laden with furs, which they undertook to dispose of to the advantage of the savages and themselves. As they had anticipated, they found the little colony and its leaders deeply interested in their reports of the extent and richness

of the fur-producing countries to the westward, as well as in their description of the unfamiliar tribes inhabiting that region. The sale of the furs having resulted in a handsome profit, Groseilliers announced to his brother-in-law his intention of making the journey on his own account. There was no dearth of volunteers eager to embark in the enterprise, and from those who offered their services he chose six Frenchmen—*coureurs des bois* or bushrangers ; and having provided himself with an ample outfit, turned his footsteps once more to the prairies of the west, while Radisson went to rejoin his wife and sister at Three Rivers.

On the eve of his departure the Jesuit Fathers, distrusting Groseilliers' religious proclivities and suspecting that he might attempt to influence the Assiniboines, insisted upon one of their number accompanying him. The priest chosen for this arduous mission was the aged missionary Réné Ménard, who, in spite of his physical frailty was still undaunted by any prospect of peril; though he was, on this occasion, prevailed upon to allow his servant Guérin to accompany him. It was the priest's last journey. When Groseilliers again reached Montreal, after a season in the wilderness as prosperous as its forerunner, he bore the mournful news that Ménard had been massacred and his body, beyond question, devoured by a fierce band of Indians.

This voyage, besides showing lucrative results, also proved a memorable one for Groseilliers, inasmuch as it was during his winter's sojourn with the distant Assiniboines that he acquired information which affected his whole subsequent career. There can be no question that it was the knowledge he obtained from this tribe of a convenient route to Hudson's Bay, by way of Lake Superior, and of a system of trade with the tribes dwelling on or in proximity to that unknown sea, that caused him to set out once again in May, 1662, for the west. He was accompanied by ten men, all of whom were disaffected towards the powers which then controlled the fur-trade in New France, and the combination of good fortune and *esprit de corps* among his followers proved so successful that when, after a year's absence, he returned to

the eastern colonies, the number of furs he brought back was sufficiently great to render a simultaneous disposal of all the packs inadvisable. He adopted the wise course of dividing them into three consignments, and these were sold respectively at Montreal, Three Rivers, and Quebec. Henceforward, but one idea possessed Groseilliers—a journey to the great fur-lands of the north. It should be his life's work to exploit the fur-trade of Hudson's Bay. Already he saw himself rich —richer even than the merchant-princes of old Rochelle.

A new fur Company.

But alas for his plans, the official laxity and dissensions which had made it possible for himself and others thus to infringe with impunity, the general monopoly granted by the King came to a sudden end. A fresh patent for a new Company was issued by the Crown; a new Governor, M. d'Avagour, entered upon the scene, and the rigorous measures enacted against private traders drove many of these over to the English and the Dutch.

7 A commission from M. d'Avagour, dated the 10th of May, 1663, conveyed permission to one M. Couture to remove with five men to the bottom of the Great Bay to the North of Canada, consequent upon the requisition of some Indians, who had returned to Quebec to ask for aid to conduct and assist them in their affairs. This same Couture afterwards certified, or the French Government certified in his stead, that he really undertook this voyage, and "erected anew upon the lands at the bottom of the said Bay a cross and the arms of the King engraved on copper, and placed between two plates of lead at the foot of a large tree." Much justifiable doubt has been cast upon this story, and at a much later period, when French and English interests were contesting hotly for the sovereignty of the territory surrounding Hudson's Bay, an expedition was sent in search of the boasted memorials, but no trace of the cross or the copper escutcheon could be found. There seems every probability that the allegation, or the subsequent statement of an allegation of this description, was false.

Groseilliers had thus to reckon with the new fur-trading

proprietors of Quebec, who were to prove themselves less complaisant than the old. They instantly interdicted traders from going in search of peltries; reasoning that the produce would ultimately find its way into their hands, without the need of any such solicitation. And though Groseilliers persistently explained to them that their policy of interdiction was really a short-sighted one; that the Indians could not be always depended upon to bring their own furs to the Company's mart; and that no great time would elapse before the English or Dutch would push their way westward to Lake Superior, and so acquire an unequalled opportunity of developing the resources of the northern regions; neither his criticism and advice (founded on personal knowledge of the unstable Indian character) nor the apprehensions of rivalry, which he showed good grounds for entertaining, had any power to move the officials of the Hundred Associates. Neither argument, entreaty, nor prognostications of danger would induce them to look with any favour upon Groseilliers' project, or even entertain his proposals.

Groseilliers afterwards hinted that it was prejudice against his adopted religion which really lay at the bottom of this complete rejection of his scheme, and also accounted for the Company's refusal to avail themselves of his services, otherwise than as a mere salaried servant. It was at this juncture that he sought the advice of Radisson, and it is not unlikely that it was the counsels of his brother-in-law which induced him to resolve upon a bold step in the furtherance of his cherished project. It was well-known that the English colonists settled in New England were putting forth the strongest efforts to secure a share of the fur-trade of the North. Their allies, the redoubtable Iroquois, had upon several occasions way-laid and plundered the Huron tribes, who were conveying their cargoes to Quebec and Montreal, and had delivered these into the hands of the English. Farther westward, the Dutch were indefatigable in their endeavours to divert the fur-traffic of the North from the St. Lawrence to the Hudson. But the Dutch had been vanquished by the English; New Amsterdam was now New York; and it was

English brains and English money which now controlled the little colony and the untravelled lands which lay beyond it. It was to the English, therefore, that the indomitable adventurer now determined to apply. Madame Radisson had relatives in Boston; her father was an intimate friend of the Governor. Relying on such influences as these, but still more on the

Groseilliers in Boston.



soundness of his project, Groseilliers made his way to Boston by way of Acadia.

Early in 1664 we find the Mother Superior of the Ursuline Nuns at Quebec writing thus of Groseilliers:

"As he had not been successful in making a fortune, he was seized with a fancy to go to New England to better his condition. He excited a hope among the English that he had found a passage to the Sea of the North."

The good Mother Superior was deceived. It was no part of Groseilliers' plan to seek a passage to the Sea of the North; but one can hardly doubt that he found it highly politic that such a report should obtain currency in Quebec. The fur-trade of the North, and the fur-trade alone, was Groseilliers' lode-stone; but in spite of all it had cost him to acquire the knowledge he already possessed, he was ready to abandon the land and fresh water route, and seek the shores of Hudson's Bay from the side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Doubtless many causes operated to alter his original plan; but there can be little question that the most potent was the opposition of the Canadian Company. Yet had the sea route not existed, even the opposition of the Company would not have sufficed to baulk him of a fulfilment of his designs. He would not have been the first French trader, even at that early day in the history of the rival colonies, to circumvent his countrymen, and, taking advantage of their confined area of activity, to conduct negotiations with the Indians surrounding the most distant outposts of their territory. The proceeding would have been hazardous had the Company possessed the force necessary to assert its rights to the trade of the whole northern and north-western country; but the new company would not as yet possess the force. The most real danger Groseilliers had to fear was that, if he persisted in his endeavours to draw away the trade of the northern tribes, he might be outlawed and his property, and that of his brother-in-law Radisson, confiscated. Groseilliers had left his wife and his son in Canada, and he therefore went to work with considerable caution.

It has been asserted, and perhaps with excellent point, that Groseilliers may have been very powerfully influenced in the abandonment of his land and fresh water route by obtaining an entirely new idea of the configuration of northern North America. In the maps which were likely at

that time to have found their way to Quebec, the northern regions are but very dimly defined; and with the knowledge of geography gained only from these maps Groseilliers could hardly have realized the accessibility of the approach by sea. It seems likely therefore that the change of route was not even thought of until Groseilliers had had his interview with Radisson; it was probably Radisson—with his superior geographical knowledge and more thorough comprehension (through his kinship with the Kirkes, all famous mariners) of the discoveries made by the English in the northern parts—who advocated the sea-route. The idea must have grown upon him gradually. His countrymen took it for granted that the whole northern country was theirs, apparently assuming the sole mode of access to be by land. The sea route never seems to have occurred to them, or if they thought of it at all, it was dismissed as dangerous and impracticable for purposes of commerce. The configuration of the northern country, the form and extent of the seas, certainly the character of the straits and islands, were to them little known. Secure in what they regarded as nominal possession, forgetful that English mariners had penetrated and named these northern waters, the officials of the Canada Company were content to pursue a policy of *laissez faire* and to deprecate all apprehensions of rivalry.

Singular coincidence! More than a century was to elapse and another Company with ten times the wealth, the power, the sovereignty wielded by this one: not French—for France had then been shorn of her dominion and authority—but English, scorning the all-conquering, all-pervading spirit of mercantile England, was to pursue the same policy, and to suffer the loss of much blood and treasure in consequence of such pursuit.

Groseilliers finds no patrons.

In Boston, the main difficulty which Groseilliers encountered was a scarcity of wealth. His scheme was approved by many of the leading spirits there, and his assertions as to the wealth of the fur-bearing country were not doubted. But at that period the little Puritan colony was much put to it to

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PRINCE RUPERT.

(After the painting by Sir P. Lely.)

carry out projects for its own security and maintenance, not to mention plans for enrichment much nearer home.* And it was pointed out to him that so long as schemes which were regarded as essential to safety could only be with difficulty supported, no pecuniary assistance could be rendered for an extraneous project, however promising its nature.*

There were in Boston at this time, however, four personages whom the King had sent as envoys, in 1664, to force the Dutch to evacuate Manhattan, and who were also a kind of commission instructed to visit the English colonies, and to hear and rule their complaints. They were Richard Nichols, Robert Carr, George Cartwright and Samuel Maverick. One of these, Colonel Carr, it is said, strongly urged Groseilliers to proceed to England and offer his services to the King.

Although, therefore, he was unable to secure there the patronage he desired, Groseilliers' visit to Boston was not quite barren of profit. He fell in besides with an intelligent sea-faring man, Zachary Gillam, who was then captain and part-owner of a small vessel, the *Nonsuch*, with which he plied a trade between the colony and the mother country. Gillam expressed himself eager to assist in the project as far as lay in his power, and offered his services in case an equipment could be found. A long correspondence passed between Groseilliers and his brother-in-law in Canada, the latter very naturally urging that as the New England project had failed, it would be advisable not to seek further aid from the English, but that, as nothing was to be expected from the Canada Company, or the merchants of Canada, it would be as well to journey to France, and put the matter before the French Court.

Zachary Gillam.

* For example, the adjoining colony of Connecticut had appealed to them for help in their laudable enterprise of despoiling the Dutch of their possessions. Raids upon the territory and trading-posts controlled by the Dutch were a constantly recurring feature in the history of those times, and nearly the whole of the zeal and substance remaining to the English colonists in Connecticut and Virginia, after their periodical strifes with the Indians, were devoted to forcing the unhappy Hollanders to acknowledge the sovereignty of King Charles of England.

Groseilliers seems to have agreed to this; and he wrote back begging Radisson to join him in Boston with the object of accompanying him to France. In June, 1665, both the adventurers set sail in the *Nonsuch* for Plymouth, whence in all likelihood they proceeded direct to Havre.

It would be unprofitable, and at best but a repetition, to describe the difficulties Groseilliers and his brother-in-law met with in Paris, the petitions they presented and the many verbal representations they made. In the midst of their ill-success Colonel Carr came to Paris. There is extant a letter of his to Lord Arlington. "Having heard," says he, "by the French in New England of a great traffic in beavers" to be got in the region of Hudson's Bay, and "having had proofs of the assertions" of the two adventurers, he thought "the finest present" he could make to his majesty was to despatch these men to him.

The ambassador pondered on this and at last decided to entrust Groseilliers with a letter to a certain prince—a friend of his—and a patron of the Arts and Sciences. Leaving Radisson despondent in Paris, therefore, the other adventurer crossed the Channel and found himself, with a beating heart, for the first time in the English capital.

CHAPTER III.

1667–1668.

Prince Rupert—His Character—Serves through the Civil War—His Naval Expedition in the West Indies—Residence in France—And ultimately in London—He receives Groseilliers and introduces him to the King.

It was a fortunate chance for Medard Chouart des Groseilliers that threw him, as we shall see, into the hands of such a man as Rupert, Prince of England and Bohemia.

A dashing soldier, a daring sailor, a keen and enlightened student, a man of parts, and at the age of forty-seven still worshipping adventure as a fetish and irresistibly attracted by anything that savoured of novelty, there was perhaps no other noble in England more likely to listen to such a project as the Canadian was prepared to pour into his ear, no prince in the whole of Europe more likely to succumb to its charm.

Rupert may, on good grounds, be considered one of the most remarkable men of that age. He was the third son of the King of Bohemia by the Princess Elizabeth Stuart, eldest daughter of James I. In common with most German princes he had been educated for the army ; and, as he used to observe himself in after years, there was no profession better fitted for a prince provided he could be allowed to fight battles. It was a maxim of his that the arts of patience, of strategy, and parleying with the enemy should be left to statesmen and caitiffs ; and it can be said with truth of Rupert that no one could possibly have acted more completely in accordance with his rule than himself. "Than Prince Rupert," wrote a chronicler at his death, "no man was more courageous or intrepid. He could storm a citadel but, alas, he could never keep it. A lion in the fray, he was a very lamb, tho' a fuming one, if a siege was called for."

Youthful, high-spirited and of comely appearance, Rupert found his way to England during his twentieth year to offer



PRINCE RUPERT

(After a painting by Vandyke.)

his services to his royal uncle, King Charles I. The country was then on the brink of a civil war. Parliament had proved refractory. The Puritan forces had already assembled; and in a few months the first blow was struck. The young Prince placed himself at the head of a troop of cavaliers and soon all England was ringing with the fame of his exploits. On more than one occasion did Cromwell have reason to remember the prowess of "fiery Prince Rupert."

Such dashing tactics and spontaneous strategy, however, could not always prevail. He was charged with the defence of Bristol, with what result is a matter of common historical knowledge. His own observation on this episode in his career is an admirable epitome of his character, as comprehensive as it is brief, "I have no stomach for sieges."

The Great Company's Founder.

Charles wrote him a letter of somewhat undue severity, in which he exhibited all the asperity of his character as well as his ignorance of the situation. Perhaps if he had realized that the circumstances would have rendered the retention of Bristol impossible even to a Caesar or a Turenne, he might have written in a more tolerant strain; but it is not very probable. In any case the letter cut Rupert to the heart.

Before his final overthrow Charles, indeed, relented from his severity, and created his nephew Earl of Holdernesse and Duke of Cumberland, granting him also a safe conduct to France, which was honoured by the Parliamentary leaders.

Thenceforward for a few years Rupert's career is directly associated with the high seas. On the revolt of the fleet from the control of the Commonwealth he made his way on board of one of the King's vessels, and figured in several naval battles and skirmishes. But even here the result was a foregone conclusion. The bulk of the ships and crews still remaining loyal were rapidly captured or sunk, and the remnant, of which Rupert assumed command, was exceedingly small. He began by sailing to Ireland, whither he was pursued by Popham and Blake, who very quickly blocked him up in the harbour of Kinsale. But the Puritan captains were deceived if, as it appears, they fancied the Prince an easy prey. Rupert was no more the sailor than he had been the soldier to brook so facile a capture. He effected a bold escape, just under their guns. But realizing his helplessness to engage the Puritan fleet in open combat, he inaugurated a series of minor conflicts, a kind of guerilla warfare, which, to our modern notions, would best be classified under the head of privateering, to use no harsher term.

The Spanish Main was at that period an excellent ground for operations of this kind, and with very little delay Rupert was soon very busy with his small but gallant fleet in those waters. Here the commander of the little *Reformation* and his convoys spent three years with no little pecuniary profit to himself and crew. On more than one occasion his exploits in the neighbourhood of the West Indies bore no distant resemblance to piracy, as he boarded impartially not only English, Dutch and Spanish ships, but also those flying the English colours. Howbeit on one occasion, being advised that the master of one craft was a Frenchman, he generously forebore to reap the profits of his valour out of respect to the monarch with whom both his cousins, Charles and James, had found a refuge. He insisted that the plunder should be restored. On the whole, however, Rupert seems to have had little conscience in the matter. The mere excitement of such adventures alone delighted him, although it would scarce have satisfied his crews. There is reason to suppose that he himself was not actuated primarily by the mere love of gain. It is known that several of his captains returned with large fortunes; Rupert's own profits were long a matter for conjecture. Even at his death they could not be approximately ascertained; for while he left a goodly fortune, comprising jewels valued at twenty thousand pounds, much of this fortune was acquired legitimately since these stirring days of his youth; and no small part was derived from his share in the Hudson's Bay Company.

A resemblance to piracy.

The exiled prince, in whose name Rupert was always extremely careful to conduct his depredations on the prosperous commerce of the West Indies, does not appear himself to have derived much material advantage therefrom. It was true the terror of his name was already industriously spread in those waters, and this perhaps was some consolation for the contempt with which it was regarded by the insolent and usurping Puritans. In a newspaper of the period, "Pleasant Passages," I find under date of October 15, 1652, the following quaint comment:

"Prince Rupert hath lately seized on some good prizes and he keeps himself far remote; and makes his kinsman, Charles Stuart, make a leg for some cullings of his windfalls."

Rupert after a time transferred the scene of his operations to the Azores, where after some collisions with the Portuguese, he met with a catastrophe so severe as to compel him to permanently desist from his predatory operations. A violent storm came on, and the *Reformation* and his entire fleet perished, no fewer than 360 souls being lost on the flagship. It was with difficulty that the Prince and twelve of his companions, including his brother Maurice, escaped with a portion of the treasure. A contemporary news-writer records that Rupert had landed at Nantes with ten thousand pounds or so, "'tis said by those best informed. The King hath sent his carriage to meet him at Orleans."

Loss of the "Reformation."

Charles, who was of course the King mentioned, was then in high hopes of obtaining funds from his cousin Rupert, which might enable him to make an effort for the recovery of his crown. But the king, minus a throne, was destined to be disappointed. Rupert did not yet seem prepared to disgorge, acting, it is easy to see, on advice.*

"No money for his Majesty out of all this," forms the burden of numerous letters written by the faithful Edward Hyde, afterwards to become the Lord Chancellor Clarendon.

"The money the King should have received!" he complains, in an epistle addressed to Sir Richard Browne. "Why, Rupert is so totally governed by the Lord Keeper, Sir Edward Herbert, that the King knows him not. The King hasn't had a penny, and Rupert pretends the King owes him more than ever I was worth."

Hyde had no love for the Lord Keeper of the exiled court; but according to several contemporary writers, the buccaneering Prince looked upon Herbert as "an oracle," (to quote the diarist Evelyn) and chose for a time at least to spend most of his gains in his own way.

* "We have another great officer," records "Pleasant Passages" in another budget of news from Paris, "Prince Ruperte, Master of the Horse."

But Rupert did not persist in the course suggested by his friend Herbert. Soon afterwards he is announced to have made Charles a present of two thousand pounds, for which the King expressed his profound satisfaction by attaching him immediately to the royal household.

A little later, in 1654, there is recorded the following, printed in the "Loyal Gentleman at Court."

"Prince Rupert flourishes highly here, with his troop of blackamoors; and so doth his cousin Charles, they having shared the money made of his prize goods at Nantz."

It was in this year that Rupert seems to have engaged one William Strong, a cavalier who had lost all he possessed, to replace John Holder as his private secretary, a circumstance worthy of mention, inasmuch as it was Strong who was to figure later as the intermediary between his master and the adventurer Groseilliers in London.

Rupert's Secretary.

There is a passage of this period which describes Rupert as he appeared in Paris, "a straight and comely man, very dark-featured," probably owing to exposure in warm climates, "with jet black hair and a great passion for dress." He is often referred to in news-letters and diaries of the time under the sobriquet of the "Black Prince."

"Our Black Prince Ruperte" records one, "has had a narrow escape from drowning in the Seine; but by the help of one of his blackamoors escaped."

This was perhaps the period of the closest friendship between Charles and his Bohemian cousin; inasmuch as a decided coolness had already arisen on the part of the exiled monarch and his brother, the Duke of York. This coolness at length terminated in a quarrel, and a separation in the ensuing year at Bruges. Indeed, the Duke advised Rupert to have no further dealings with his royal brother, a proposition which the Prince wisely, and fortunately for himself, neglected to entertain, for had he acted otherwise, it is extremely doubtful if at the Restoration he would have been in a position to demand any favours at

the monarch's hands. James, probably on this score, never afterwards professed much cordiality towards his kinsman, Rupert.

In the years between 1656 and 1665, Rupert spent much of his time in cultivating science and the arts. There are a hundred evidences of his extraordinary ingenuity. A mere list of his devices and inventions, as printed at his decease in 1682, almost entitles him to be considered the Edison of his day, a day in which inventors were rare. Yet in the period before the outbreak of the Dutch war his activity was by no means limited to the laboratory which he had constructed for himself in Kings' Bench Walk, Temple, or to his study at Windsor. None could have exhibited greater versatility. In April, 1662, he was sworn a member of the Privy Council; he also became a member of the Tangier Commission; and in December of the same year he was unanimously elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. He already cut a prominent figure as a patron of commerce, being appointed a member of the Council of Trade, and taking an active part in the promotion of commerce with Africa as a member of the Royal African Company.

A patron of commerce.

With all his sympathies and activities, however, it is very clear that Rupert did not enjoy very great favour at Court. He was suspected of holding his royal cousin in not very high esteem, and of entertaining pronounced opinions on the subject of the royal prerogative; whatever the cause, his influence at Whitehall was not always fortunate. Seeing his councils neglected on several occasions, he kept aloof, and the courtiers, taking as they supposed their cue from their master, made light of his past achievements, finding in his surrender of the city of Bristol, a specially suitable subject for their derision.

In 1664 we find in Pepys' Diary that Rupert had been "sent to command the Guinny Fleet. Few pleased, as he is accounted an unhappy [*i.e.*, unlucky] man." As a consequence of these sentiments, which Rupert was soon destined by his valour to alter, one Captain Holmes was sent instead.

Nevertheless it was known at Court that Rupert desired a naval employment, and as the authorities found that their estimate of his abilities was not mistaken, he was in 1666 selected to command the fleet against the Dutch, in conjunction with the Duke of Albemarle. His conduct was most exemplary. On one occasion he wrested a victory from the Dutch, and again in the month of June beat them soundly, pursuing them into their own harbour. Returning to England on the cessation of hostilities, he found himself in much higher favour at Court. But with a single exception, which I will proceed to relate, Rupert sought no favours at the hands of his royal relations from this moment until the day of his death. He was content to pursue an even career in comparative solitude, a circumstance for which a serious physical ailment, which soon overtook and for a time threatened his life, was no doubt in some measure responsible. The fire which distinguished his youth was exchanged, we are told, for good temper and sedateness. He was credited with writing an autobiography, but if the report be true, it is a pity there remains no tangible evidence of such an intention. It is certain that his correspondence was so large as to entail the continuous employment of a secretary, William Strong; but prior to the inception of the Hudson's Bay project, it probably related almost entirely to his chemical and scientific researches and achievements.

In May, 1667, the Prince's secretary opened a letter from Lord Preston, then English ambassador at Paris, intimating that one M. des Groseilliers, a Canadian fur-trader, would be the bearer of an introductory letter from himself to his highness. He was convinced that the French were managing the fur-trade of New France very clumsily, and he added that Monsieur des Groseilliers seemed as much disaffected towards the new company lately chartered by the French king as towards the old. There is no reason, in the writer's opinion, why English men of commerce should not avail themselves of opportunities and instruments, such as the weak policy of their rivals now afforded, for obtaining a share in the northern fur-trade.

Unfortunately Rupert was at first unable to see the adventurer who had travelled so far. The cause of the delay is not quite clear, but it appears plausible to suppose that it was due to the Prince's illness. He had already undergone the operation of trepanning, and it was found necessary to still continue treatment for the disease to which he had been subject. At any rate it was a fortnight or three weeks before the first interview took place, and the Prince and the French trader did not meet until the 4th of June. The result of this interview was that Prince Rupert promised his credit for the scheme. Three days later he sent for Groseilliers, who found on his arrival in the Prince's apartments several gentlemen, among whom Lord Craven, Sir John Robinson and Mr. John Portman appear to have been numbered. In a week from this conference both Radisson, Groseilliers and Portman travelled to Windsor Castle at the request of the Prince. There is no record of what then passed, but there is mention of a further meeting in a letter written by Oldenburgh, the secretary of the Royal Society to Robert Boyle, in America.

Rupert sends for Groseilliers.

"Surely I need not tell you from hence" he wrote, "what is said here with great joy of the discovery of a north-west passage by two Englishmen and one Frenchman, lately represented by them to his Majesty at Oxford and, answered by the grant of a vessel to sail into Hudson's Bay and channel into the South Sea."

From this it would appear that Radisson was then popularly supposed to be an Englishman, probably on account of his being Sir John Kirke's son-in-law, and also that the matter was not settled at Windsor, but at Oxford.

Then came a long delay—during which there is nothing worthy of record. It was too late to attempt a voyage to the Bay in 1667, but during the autumn and winter Groseilliers and Radisson could console themselves with the assurance that their scheme had succeeded.

For at last the adventurers had met with a tangible success. A ship was engaged and fitted out for them; and it was none other than that commanded by their Boston friend, Captain Zachary Gillam.

CHAPTER IV.

1668–1670.

The Prince Visits the *Nonsuch*—Arrival in the Bay—Previous Voyages of Exploration—A Fort Commenced at Rupert's River—Gillam's Return—Dealing with the Nodwayes—Satisfaction of the Company—A Royal Charter Granted.

Early in the morning of the 3rd of June, 1668, without attracting undue attention from the riparian dwellers and loiterers, a small skiff shot out from Wapping Old Stairs. The boatman directed its prow towards the *Nonsuch*, a ketch of fifty tons, then lying at anchor in mid-Thames, and soon had the satisfaction of conveying on board in safety his Highness Prince Rupert, Lord Craven, and Mr. Hays, the distinguished patrons of an interesting expedition that day embarking for the New World. Radisson was to have accompanied the expedition but he had met with an accident and was obliged to forego the journey until the following year.

All hands being piped on deck, a salute was fired in honour of the visitors. Captain Zachary Gillam and the Sieur des Groseilliers received the Prince, and undertook to exhibit, not without a proper pride, their craft and its cargo. Subsequently a descent was made to the captain's cabin, where a bottle of Madeira was broached, and the success of the voyage toasted by Rupert and his companions. The party then returned to Wapping, amidst a ringing cheer from captain and crew. By ten o'clock the *Nonsuch* had weighed anchor and her voyage had begun.

The passage across the Atlantic was without any incident worthy of record. The vessel was fortunate in encountering no gales or rough seas. The leisure of Groseilliers and Captain Gillam was employed chiefly in discussing the most advantageous landfall, and in drawing up plans for a settlement for fort-building and for trade with the tribes. By the 4th of August they sighted Resolution Isle, at the entrance of

Hudson's Straits. They continued fearlessly on their course. During their progress the shores on either hand were occasionally visible; and once a squall compelled them to go so near land as to descry a band of natives, the like of whom for bulk and singularity of costume, Groseilliers and the captain had never clapped eyes upon. They were right in judging these to be Esquimaux.

The "Nonsuch" in the Bay.

On the seventh day of their passage amongst those narrow channels and mountains of ice which had chilled the enthusiasm and impeded the progress of several daring navigators before them, the forty-two souls on board the *Nonsuch* were rewarded with a sight of Hudson's Bay.*

Already, and long before the advent of the *Nonsuch*, Hudson's Bay had a history and a thrilling one.

In 1576 Sir Martin Frobisher made his first voyage for the discovery of a passage to China and Cathay by the north-west, discovering and entering a strait to which he gave his name. In the following year he made a second voyage, "using all possible means to bring the natives to trade, or give him some account of themselves, but they were so wild that they only studied to destroy the English." Frobisher remained until winter approached and then returned to England. A further voyage of his in 1578-79 made no addition to the knowledge already derived.

Six years later Captain John Davis sailed from Dartmouth, and in that and succeeding voyages reached the Arctic circle

* The proportions of this inland sea are such as to give it a prominent place among the geographical features of the world. One thousand three hundred miles in length, by six hundred miles in breadth, it extends over twelve degrees of latitude, and covers an area not less than half a million square miles. Of the five basins into which Canada is divided, that of Hudson's Bay is immeasurably the largest, the extent of country draining into it being estimated at three million square miles. To swell the mighty volume of its waters there come rivers which take their rise in the Rocky Mountains on the west, and the Labrador wilderness on the east; while southward its river roots stretch far down below the forty-ninth parallel, reaching even to the same lake source whence flows a stream into the Gulf of Mexico. A passing breath of wind may determine whether the ultimate destiny of the rain drop falling into the little lake be the bosom of the Mexican Gulf or the chilly grasp of the Arctic ice-floe.

through the straits bearing his name. He related having found an open sea tending westward, which he hoped might be the passage so long sought for; but the weather proved too tempestuous, and, the season being far advanced, he likewise returned to a more hospitable clime. After this there were no more adventures in this quarter of the world until 1607, when Captain Hudson explored as far north as 80 degrees 23 minutes. On his third voyage, two years later, he proceeded a hundred leagues farther along the strait, and arriving at the Bay resolved to winter there.

Hudson was preparing for further exploration when Henry Green, a profligate youth, whom he had taken into his house and preserved from ruin by giving him a berth on board without the knowledge of the owners, conspired with one Robert Ivett, the mate, whom Captain Hudson had removed, to mutiny against Hudson's command. These turned the captain, with his young son John, a gentleman named Woodhouse, who had accompanied the expedition, together with the carpenter and five others, into a long-boat, with hardly any provisions or arms. The inhuman crew suffered all the hardships they deserved, for in a quarrel they had with the savages Green and two of his companions were slain. As for Ivett, who had made several voyages with Hudson, and was the cause of all the mischief, he died on the passage home. Habbakuk Prickett, one of the crew, who wrote all the account we have of the latter part of the voyage, was a servant of Sir Dudley Diggs. Probably his master's influence had something to do with his escape from punishment.

Henry Hudson's fate.

This was the last ever seen or heard, by white men, of Henry Hudson, and there is every likelihood that he and the others drifted to the bottom of the Bay and were massacred by the savages.

In the year of Hudson's death Sir Thomas Button, at the instigation of that patron of geographical science, Prince Henry, pursued the dead hero's discoveries. He passed Hudson's Straits and, traversing the Bay, settled above two hundred leagues to the south-west from the straits, bestowing upon the adjacent region the name of New Wales. Wintering

in the district afterwards called Port Nelson, Button made an investigation of the boundaries of this huge inland sea, from him named Button's Bay.

In 1611 came the expedition of Baffin; and in 1631 Captain James sailed westward to find the long-sought passage to China, spending the winter at Charlton Island, which afterwards became a depot of the Company. Captain Luke Fox went out in the same year, but his success was no greater than his predecessors in attaining the object of his search. He landed at Port Nelson and explored the country round about, without however much advantage either to himself or to his crew. When the *Nonsuch* arrived a quarter of a century had passed since an European had visited Hudson's Bay.

After much consultation, the adventurers sailed southward from Cape Smith, and on Sept. 29 decided to cast anchor at the entrance to a river situated in 51 degrees latitude. The journey was ended; the barque's keel grated on the gravel, a boat was lowered and Gillam and Groseilliers went promptly ashore. The river was christened Rupert's River,* and it being arranged to winter here, all hands were ordered ashore to commence the construction of a fort and dwellings, upon which the name of King Charles was bestowed. Thus our little ship's-load of adventurers stood at last on the remotest shores of the New World; all but two of them strangers in a strange land.

For three days after their arrival Groseilliers and his party beheld no savages. The work of constructing the fort went on apace. It was, under Groseilliers' direction, made of logs, after the fashion of those built by the traders and Jesuits in Canada; a stockade enclosing it, as some protection from sudden attack. The experienced bushranger deemed it best not to land the cargo until communication had been made with the natives; and their attitude, friendly or otherwise, towards the strangers ascertained. No great time was spent in waiting; for on the fourth day a small band of the tribe called Nodwayes

The first Fort.

* Known afterwards as Nemiscau by the French.

appeared, greatly astonished at the presence of white settlers in those parts. After a great deal of parleying, the Indians were propitiated by Groseilliers with some trifling gifts, and the object of their settlement made known. The Indians retired, promising to return before the winter set in with all the furs in their possession, and also to spread the tidings amongst the other tribes.

The autumn supply proved scanty enough; but the adventurers being well provisioned could afford to wait until the spring.

Groseilliers' anticipations were realized; but not without almost incredible activity on his part. He spent the summer and autumn, and part of the ensuing winter, in making excursions into the interior. He made treaties with the Nodwayes, the Kilistineaux, the Ottawas, and other detachments of the Algonquin race. Solemn conclaves were held, in which the bushranger dwelt—with that rude eloquence of which he was master, and which both he and Radisson had borrowed from the Indians—on the superior advantages of trade with the English. Nor did his zeal here pause; knowing the Indian character as he did, he concocted stories about the English King and Prince Rupert; many a confiding savage that year enriched his pale-face vocabulary by adding to it "Charles" and "Rupert," epithets which denoted that transcendent twain to whom the French bushranger had transferred his labours and his allegiance.

The winter of 1668-69 dragged its slow length along, and in due course the ground thawed and the snow disappeared. No sooner had the spring really arrived than strange natives began to make their appearance, evincing a grotesque eagerness to strike bargains with the whites for the pelts which they brought from the bleak fastnesses. By June it was thought fit that Captain Gillam should return with the *Nonsuch*, leaving Groseilliers and others at the fort. Gillam accordingly sailed away with such cargo as they had been able to muster, to report to the Prince and his company of merchants the excellent prospects afforded by the post on Rupert's River, provided only the Indians could be made aware of its existence, and the French trade intercepted.

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THE ORIGINAL CHARTER OF THE GREAT COMPANY.

(From a Photograph.)

Chouart des Groseilliers in all his transactions with the natives exhibited great hardihood of speech and action; and few indeed were the occasions which caught him unawares. It happened more than once, for instance, that some of the wandering Algonquins or Hurons recognized in this smooth-tongued leader of the English fort the same French trader they had known at Montreal, and the French posts on the western lakes, and marvelled much that he who had then been loudly crying up "King Lewis and the Fleur-de-lis," should now be found surrounded by pale-faces of a different speech, known to be the allies of the terrible Iroquois. Groseilliers met their exclamations with a smile; he represented himself as profoundly dissatisfied with the manner in which the French traders treated his friends the Indians, causing them to travel so far and brave such perils to bring their furs, and giving them so little in return. "Tell all your friends to come hither," he cried, "and King Charles will give you double what King Lewis gives."

Groseilliers' presence of mind.

In August, 1669, a gun was heard by Groseilliers and his English and native companions. With great joy the bush-ranger ran from the fort to the point of land commanding the Bay, thinking to welcome back Gillam and the expected *Nonsuch*. But as the vessel came nearer he saw it was not the *Nonsuch*, and for a moment he was dismayed, uncertain whether or not to make himself known. But the colour of the flag she carried reassured him; he caused a fire to be made, that the attention of those on board might be attracted by the smoke; and was soon made aware that his signal had been seen. The sloop headed up Rupert's River, and a boat containing three men was lowered from her side. Greater still was Groseilliers' joy when he recognized amongst the approaching party in the boat his brother-in-law, Pierre Radisson. These two sturdy children of the wilderness embraced one another with great affection and set to work diligently to barter. The *Nonsuch* arrived safely in the Thames in the month of August.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the satisfaction of the

company of London merchants at hearing the results of their first venture. They had taken counsel together, and considering the importance of securing a charter of monopoly from the King to be paramount, Prince Rupert was persuaded to use his good offices to this end.

Satisfaction of the Adventurers.

Charles was doubtless relieved to hear that his cousin Rupert desired no greater favour. He expressed himself ready to grant such a patent, provided the Lord Chancellor approved. A charter was accordingly drawn up forthwith at the instance of the Prince, in the usual form of such charters; but the winter of 1669-70 elapsed without its having received the royal assent. Indeed it was not until the second day of May that Prince Rupert, presenting himself at Whitehall, received from the King's own hands one of the most celebrated instruments which ever passed from monarch to subject, and which, though almost incessantly in dispute, was perpetuated in full force throughout two centuries.*

This document was granted to Prince Rupert and seventeen nobles and gentlemen, comprising the Duke of Albemarle,† Earls Craven and Arlington, Lord Ashley,‡ Sir John Robinson, Sir Robert Vyner, Sir Peter Colleton, Sir Edward Hungerford, Sir Paul Neele, Sir John Griffith, Sir Philip Carteret, Knights and Baronets; James Hays, John Kirke, Francis Wellington, William Prettyman, John Fenn, Esquires, and John Portman, "Citizen and Goldsmith," incorporated into

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*See Appendix.

† The second Duke, Charles' old friend, General George Monk, known to all the leaders of English history as the brave restorer of the King, afterwards created Duke of Albemarle, died in the year the charter was granted.

‡ Lord Ashley, the ancestor of the present Earl of Shaftsbury, and one of the ruling spirits of the reign of Charles II., will also be remembered as the Achitophel of Dryden.

"A man so various that he seemed to be
Not one; but all mankind's epitome."

Arlington, another of the Honourable Adventurers, was also a member of the celebrated Cabal.

a company, with the exclusive right to establish settlements and carry on trade at Hudson's Bay. The charter recites that those adventurers having, at their own great cost, undertaken an expedition to Hudson's Bay in order to discover a new passage into the South Sea, and to find a trade for furs, minerals and other commodities, and having made such discoveries as encouraged them to proceed in their design, his Majesty granted to them and their heirs, under the name of "The Governor and Company of Merchants-Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay," the power of holding and alienating lands, and the sole right of trade in Hudson's Strait, and with the territories upon the coasts of the same.

The Charter.

They were authorized to get out ships of war, to erect forts, make reprisals, and send home all English subjects entering the Bay without their license, and to declare war and make peace with any prince or people not Christian.

The territory described as Rupert's Land consisted of the whole region whose waters flowed into Hudson's Bay. It was a vast tract—perhaps as vast as Europe—how much vaster was yet to be made known, for the breadth of the Continent of North America had not yet been even approximately ascertained. For all the Adventurers knew the Pacific Ocean was not distant more than one hundred miles west of the Bay.

In the same merry month of May the *Prince Rupert* set sail from Gravesend, conveying a new cargo, a new crew, and a newly appointed overseer of trade, to the Company's distant dominions.

CHAPTER V.

1668–1670.

Danger Apprehended to French Dominion—Intendant Talon—Fur Trade Extended Westward—News of the English Expedition Reaches Quebec—Sovereign Rights in Question—English Priority Established.

Although neither the Governor, the Fur Company nor the officials of the Most Christian King at Quebec, had responded favourably to the proposals of Groseilliers, yet they were not long in perceiving that a radical change in their trade policy was desirable. Representations were made to M. Colbert and the French Court. It was even urged that France's North American dominions were in danger, unless a more positive and aggressive course were pursued with regard to extension. These representations, together with the knowledge that the Dutch on the south side of the St. Lawrence and in the valley of the Hudson had unexpectedly acknowledged allegiance to the King of England, determined Lewis to evince a greater interest in Canadian affairs than he had done hitherto.

French activity.

Mezy was recalled, to die soon afterwards ; and Daniel de Remin, Seigneur de Courcelles, was despatched as Provincial Governor. A new office was created, that of Intendant of Justice, Police and Finance ; and Jean Talon—a man of ability, experience and energy—was made the first Intendant. Immediately upon his arrival, he took steps to confirm the sovereignty of his master over the vast realms in the West ; and to set up the royal standard in the region of the Great Lakes.

In 1668 Talon returned to France, taking with him one of those hardy bushrangers (*coureurs de bois*) who passed nearly the whole of their lives in the interior and in the company of the Hurons. This man seems to have cut a very picturesque figure. He had been scalped, and bore about his person many grim mutilations and disfigurements,

to bear witness to his adventures amongst unfriendly tribes. He accompanied Talon in the capacity of servant or body-guard, and appears to have had little difficulty in making himself an object of infinite interest to the lackeys and concierges of Paris. On the Intendant's return to Canada, this daring personage, Peray by name, is alluded to as Talon's most trusted adviser with regard to the western country and the tribes inhabiting it. In one of the Intendant's letters, dated February 24th, 1669, he writes that Peray had "penetrated among the western nations farther than any Frenchman; and had seen the copper mine on Lake Huron. This man offers to go to that mine and explore either by sea, or by the lake and river—such communication being supposed to exist between Canada and the South Sea—or to the Hudson's Bay."

French activity had never been so great in the new world as in the years between Groseilliers departure from Quebec and the period when the English fur-traders first came in contact with the French on the shores of Hudson's Bay, thirteen years later.

In the summer of 1669, the active and intelligent Louis Joliet, with an outfit of 4,000 livres, supplied him by the Intendant, penetrated into an unknown region and exhibited the white standard of France before the eyes of the astonished natives.

This also was the period which witnessed the exploits of La Salle, and of Saint Lusson. Trade followed quickly on their heels. In March, 1670, five weeks before the charter was granted to the Great Company, a party of Jesuits arriving at Sault Ste. Marie found twenty-five Frenchmen trading there with the Indians. These traders reported that a most lucrative traffic had sprung up in that locality. Coincident with the tidings they thus conveyed to Talon, the Intendant learnt from some Algonquins who had come to Quebec to trade, that two European vessels had been seen in Hudson's Bay.

"After reflecting," he wrote to Colbert, "on all the nations

that might have penetrated as far north as that, I can only fall back on the English, who, under the conduct of one named Groseilliers, in former times an inhabitant of Canada, might possibly have attempted that navigation, of itself not much known and not less dangerous. I design to send by land some men of resolution to invite the Kilistinons,* who are in great numbers in the vicinity of that Bay, to come down to see us as the Ottawas do, in order that we may have the first handling of what the savages bring us, who, acting as retail dealers between ourselves and those natives (*i.e.*, the Kilistinons), make us pay for this roundabout way of three or four hundred leagues."

Colbert and the Company.

The rivalry of French and English north of the St. Lawrence had begun. With that rivalry began also from this moment that long series of disputes concerning the sovereignty of the whole northern territories, which has endured down to our own generation.

Few historical themes have ever been argued at greater length or more minutely than this—the priority of discovery, occupation, and active assumption of sovereignty over those lands surrounding Hudson's Bay, which for two centuries were to be held and ruled by the Hudson's Bay Company. The wisest jurists, the shrewdest intellects, the most painstaking students were destined to employ themselves for over a century in seeking to establish by historical evidence, by tradition and by deduction, the "rights" of the English or of the French to those regions.

A much vexed controversy.

A great deal of importance has been attached to the fact that in 1627 a charter had been granted by Lewis XIII. to a number of adventurers sent to discover new lands to the north of the River of St. Lawrence. The clause of the charter reads as follows:—"Le fort et habitation de Quebec, avec tout le pays de la Nouvelle France dite Canada, tant le long des Cotes depuis la Floride que les predecesseurs Rois de Sa Majeste ont fait habiter en rangeant les Cotes

* Kristineaux, Crees.

de la Mer jusqu'au Cercle Artique pour latitude, et de longitude depuis l'Ile de Terreneuve tirant a l'ouest au Grand Lac dit la Mer douce et au dela que de dans les terres, et le long des Rivieres qui y passant et se dechargent dans le fleuve dit St. Laurent, ou autrement la grande Riviere du Canada, et dans tous les autres fleuves qui se portent a la mer." But most writers have omitted to verify the fact that in this charter to the French Company, the only portions of land granted to the French Company are the lands or portions of lands which had already been occupied by the Kings of France, and the object of the charter was simply to give them an exclusive right of trade therein. Thus it was clearly indicated that the charter did not go further than the land occupied by the predecessors of Lewis XIV.

"New France was then understood to include the whole region of Hudson's Bay, as the maps and histories of the time, English and French, abundantly prove." This is a broad assertion, which is not supported by the early discoverers nor by the historians of that time. Charlevoix in his history described New France as being an exceedingly limited territory. There is in l'Escarbot a description which shows that at that time the whole territory known as New France extended but a few miles on each side of the St. Lawrence. Charlevoix says regretfully at that time that the giving up of this territory did not amount to much, as New France was circumscribed by very narrow limits on either side of the St. Lawrence.

When an examination is made into the facts of the voyages and expeditions alleged to have been undertaken by the French prior to 1672, it is difficult to arrive at any but a certain conclusion—that the French claims had no foundation in fact.

It was then asserted, and long afterwards repeated, that Jean Bourdon, the Attorney-General in 1656, explored the entire coast of Labrador and entered Hudson's Bay. For this assertion one is unable to find any historical support; certainly no record of any kind exists of such a voyage. There is a record in 1655, it is true, that Sieur Bourdon,

then Attorney-General, was authorized to make a discovery of *Mer du Nord;* and in order to comply with that *arrêt* of the Sovereign Council at Quebec, he actually made an attempt at such discovery. Bourdon left Quebec on May 2nd, 1657, and an entry in the records proves his return on August 11th of the same year. It is manifestly impossible that such a voyage could have been accomplished between these dates. But a reference to this business in the Jesuit relations of the succeeding year is sufficiently convincing.*

It is there recorded that on the "11th of August, there appeared the barque of M. Bourdon, which having descended the Grand River on the north side, sailed as far as the 55th degree, where it encountered a great bank of ice, which caused it to return, having lost two Hurons that it had taken as guides. The Esquimaux savages of the north massacred them and wounded a Frenchman with three arrows and one cut with a knife."

Another statement employed to strengthen the French claim to sovereignty was, that Father Dablon and Sieur de Valiere were ordered in 1661 to proceed to the country about Hudson's Bay, and that they accordingly went thither. All accounts available to the historian agree that the worthy father never reached the Bay.

Another assertion equally long-lived and equally ill-founded, was to the effect that one Sieur La Couture, with five men, proceeded overland to the Bay, and there took possession

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* Jean Bourdon was of the Province of Quebec ; he was well known to the Jesuits and trusted by them. He subsequently accompanied Father Jacques on an embassy to Governor Dongan, the Governor of the Province of New York.

In Shea's *Charlevoix*, Vol. III, pp. 39, 40, it is stated that Pere Dablon attempted to penetrate to the northern ocean by ascending the Saguenay. Early in June, two months after they set out, they found themselves at the head of the Nekauba river, 300 miles from Lake St. John. Warned of the approach of the Iroquois, they dared not proceed farther. In the New York Historical Documents (p. 97) there is an account of Dablon from the time of his arrival in Canada in 1655. He was immediately sent missionary to Onondaga, where he continued with a brief interval until 1658. In 1661 he set out overland for Hudson's Bay, but succeeded only in reaching the head waters of the Nekauba, 300 miles from Lac St. Jean.

of it in the King's name. There is no account of this voyage in *Charlevoix*, or in the "Relations des Jesuites," or in the memoir furnished by M. de Callieres to the Marquis de



ENGLISH MAP OF 1782.

Denonville. This memoir, which was penned in 1685, or twenty-one years after the time of which it treated, set forth that La Couture made the journey for purposes of discovery. Under the circumstances, particularly owing to the strong necessity under which the French were placed to find some

La Couture's mythical voyage.

shadow of right for their pretensions, M. de Callieres' memoir has been declared untrustworthy by competent authorities.

In 1663, Sieur Duquet, the King's Attorney for Quebec, and Jean L'Anglois, a Canadian colonist, are said to have gone to Hudson's Bay by order of Sieur D'Argenson, and to have renewed possession by setting up the King's arms there a second time. Such an order could hardly have been given by D'Argenson, because he had left Canada on September 16th, 1671, two years before this pretended order was given to Sieur Duquet.

It has been attempted to explain the silence of the "Relations of the Jesuits" concerning Bourdon's voyage, by asserting that they were naturally anxious that members of their own society should be the pioneers in discovery, and that therefore many important discoveries were never brought to light in their relations because they were not made by Jesuits. It is enough to say that such an argument cannot apply to the voyage of Dablon. He was a Jesuit, a man in whom the interests of the society were centred, and if a voyage had been made by him, no doubt a great deal of prominence would have been given to it. On the contrary, in the third volume of the "Jesuit Relations," 1662, we find this Jesuit, Father Dablon, describing an unsuccessful voyage that he made. There can be no doubt that he attempted a voyage. A portion of this relation is written by himself, and he calls it, "Journal du Premier Voyage Fait Vers la Mer du Nord." The first portion of it is most important and conclusive, as showing that De Callieres, in his memoir to M. De Seignely, twenty-one years afterwards, must have been speaking from hearsay, and without any authentic documents on which to base his assertions.

French falsehoods and fallacies.

Dablon says that the highest point which he did reach was Nekauba, a hundred leagues from Tadoussac, and that subsequently he returned; and this is from a report of this journey written by himself. Some have attempted to raise a doubt as to the identity of the Dablon in De Callieres' memoir, with the Dablon of the "Relations des Jesuites." But at the end of one of the volumes is a

complete list of all the Jesuits, pioneers both of the faith and in the way of discovery, and there is only one Dablon mentioned. Another inaccuracy of this memoir is as to the trip of Duquet, under an order said to have been given by Sieur D'Argenson. There can be no doubt that at the time this pretended order was given, D'Argenson had left Canada.

On the whole it may be as well for the reader to dismiss the French pretensions. They are no longer of interest, save to the hair-splitting student of the country's annals: but in their day they gave rise to a wilderness of controversy, through which we in the twentieth century may yet grope vainly for the light. For all practical purposes the question of priority was settled forever by the Ontario Boundary Commission of 1884. Let us turn rather to behold what account the Honourable Adventurers turned their new property.

CHAPTER VI.

1671.

First Public Sale at Garraway's—Contemporary Prices of Fur—The Poet Dryden—Meetings of the Company—Curiosity of the Town—Aborigines on View.

On the seventeenth day of November, 1671, the wits, beaux and well-to-do merchants who were wont to assemble at Garraway's coffee-house, London, were surprised by a placard making the following announcement:—"On the fifth of December, ensuing, There Will Be Sold, in the Greate Hall of this Place, 3,000 weight of Beaver Skins,* comprised



THE BEAVER.

in thirty lotts, belonging to the Honourable, the Governour and Company of Merchants-Adventurers Trading into Hudson's Bay."

Such was the notice of the first official sale of the Company. Up to this date, the peltries brought back in their ships had been disposed of by private treaty, an arrangement entrusted chiefly to Mr. John Portman and Mr. William Prettyman, both of whom appear to have had considerable

* The beaver, amphibious and intelligent, had for centuries a considerable place in commerce: and also a celebrity of its own as the familiar synonym for the common covering of a man's head, and here the animal becomes historic. By royal proclamation in 1638, Charles I., of England, prohibited the use of any material in the manufacture of hats "except beaver stuff or beaver wool." This proclamation was the death-warrant of beavers innumerable, sacrificed to the demands of the trade.

familiarity with the European fur-trade. The immediate occasion of this sale is a trivial matter. The causes lying behind it are of interest.

Among the numerous houses which cured and dealt in furs at this period, both in London and Bristol, there were none whose business seems to have been comparable, either in quantity or quality, to that of the great establishments which flourished in Leipsic and Amsterdam, Paris and Vienna. Indeed, it was a reproach continually levelled at the English fur-dressers that such furs as passed through their hands were vastly inferior to the foreign product; and it is certain that it was the practice of the nobles and wealthier classes, as well as the municipal and judicial dignitaries, for whose costume fur was prescribed by use and tradition, to resort not to any English establishment, but to one of the cities above-mentioned, when desirous of replenishing this department of their wardrobe. Hitherto, then, the Company had had but little opportunity of extending its trade, and but little ground to show why an intending purchaser should patronize its wares. But the superiority both in the number and quality of the skins which now began to arrive seems to have encouraged the directors to make a new bid for public custom; and as the purchasing public showed no disposition to visit their warehouses they determined to take their wares to the public.

This sale of the Company, however, the first, as it subsequently proved, of a series of great transactions which during the past two centuries have made London the centre of the world's fur-trade, did not take place until the twenty-fourth of January. It excited the greatest interest. Garraway's was crowded by distinguished men, and both the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, besides Dryden, the poet, were among the spectators. There are some lines attributed to him, under date of 1672, which may have been improvised on this occasion.

First sale well attended.

> "Friend, once 'twas Fame that led thee forth
> To brave the Tropic Heat, the Frozen North,
> Late it was Gold, then Beauty was the Spur;
> But now our Gallants venture but for Fur."

A number of purchases seem to have been made by private parties; but the bulk of the undressed beaver-skins probably went to fur merchants, and there is good reason to believe that the majority found their way into the hands of Portman and Prettyman. Beaver seems on this occasion to have fetched from thirty-five to fifty-five shillings—a high figure, which for a long time was maintained. But the Company showed considerable sagacity by not parting with its entire stock of furs at once. Only the beaver-skins were disposed of at this sale; the peltries of moose, marten, bear and otter were reserved for a separate and subsequent auction.

Prior to its incorporation, and for a year afterwards, the Company does not seem to have pursued any formal course with regard to its meetings. At first, they met at the Tower, at the Mint, or at Prince Rupert's house in Spring Garden. Once or twice they met at Garraway's. But at a conclave held on November 7th, 1671, it was resolved that a definite procedure should be established with regard both to the time and place of meeting, and to the keeping of the minutes and accounts. These latter, it was ordered, were forthwith to be rendered weekly to the General Court, so that the adventurers might be conversant with all sales, orders and commissions included in the Company's dealings. Employees' accounts were also to be posted up; and the same regulation was applied to the lists of goods received for the two ships then lying in the Thames. It was further decreed that the weekly meetings should take place at Mr. John Horth's office, "The Excise Office," in Broad Street, pending the building of a "Hudson's Bay House."

Meeting at John Horth's

Soon afterwards, a "General Court" of the adventurers was held, at which the Prince, Lord Ashley, Sir John Robinson, Sir Peter Colleson, Sir Robert Viner, Mr. Kirke and Mr. Portman were in attendance. We catch a thoroughly typical glimpse of Prince Rupert at this meeting; sober business was not at all to his taste, and at a very early stage in the proceedings he feigned either indisposition or another

appointment, and took his departure. A hint, however, may possibly have been given to him to do so, for no sooner was the door closed behind him, than his friend Lord Ashley introduced a very delicate topic which was entered into by all those present. It concerned nothing less than Prince Rupert's profits, which up to this time seem to have been very vaguely defined.

Lord Ashley spoke for the Prince and he seems to have demanded some definite payment besides a share in the enterprise; but there is no record of an agreement or of any exact sum, nor is there any basis for the conjecture that his share was ten thousand pounds. The charter of monopoly was an important one, and the King certainly not the man to fail in appreciating its value; but how much he did out of good will to his kinsman, and how much out of consideration for his own profit, will never be known. A perusal of the vast quantity of manuscript matter which exists relating to this arrangement leads to the conclusion that Charles sold the charter out of hand. And indeed one pamphleteer, intent on defaming the Company in 1766, even goes so far as to profess actual knowledge of the sum paid to his Majesty by the adventurers. Upon a consideration of all the speculations advanced, I have come to the conclusion that it is highly improbable that the King received any immediate pecuniary advantage whatever on account of the charter. There is no shadow of evidence to support the charge; and there is at least some presumptive evidence against it. Charters were both commonly and cheaply given in those days. Even where consideration was given, the amount was insignificant. In 1668, for example, Charles transferred the province of Bombay, which had come to the British Crown as portion of the dower of Catherine of Braganza, to the East India Company for an annual rent of no more than £10. On the whole then the data, such as they are, strongly favour the belief that he granted the charter simply in the cause of friendship and at the urgent instance of his cousin; while, as an additional motive, it was probably also urged upon him that a charter boasting the royal signature would

be a virtual assertion of his dominion over territory which was always somewhat in dispute.

Prince Rupert himself in any case was paid a lump sum by the adventurers, but the amount will probably never be known.

The early meetings of the Company seem to have been largely occupied in considering the question of cargoes. This was, no doubt, a very important business. The Company appear to have had two precedents which, in part, they naturally adopted, those of the Dutch (or West India Company) and the French Company. The East India Company's practice could have afforded them little assistance. They also struck out a line for themselves, and in their selection of goods for the purposes of barter they were greatly guided by the advice of Radisson, who had a very sound conception of the Indian character. From the first the Company rejected the policy of seeking to exchange glass beads and gilded kickshaws for furs. Not that they found it inexpedient to include these trifles in their cargoes: for we read in one of the newsletters of 1671, speaking of the doings at Garraway's :—

"Hither came Mr. Portman, to whom, reports says, is entrusted the purchase of beads and ribbons for the American savages by the new Adventurers, and who is charged with being in readiness to bargain for sackfuls of child's trinkets as well as many outlandish things, which are proper for barter He takes the rallying in great good-humour."

Long before the Company was thought of, the manufacture of beads and wampum for the New England trade had been going on in London. But beads and jewellery, it was argued, were better suited for the African and East Indian trade. It was Radisson who pointed out with great propriety that the northern tribes would become most useful to the Company if they were provided with weapons for killing or ensnaring the game, as well as with the knives, hatchets and kettles, which were indispensable for dressing it, and for preparing pemmican. And his advice was taken on this, as on most other points. Thus for the *Prince Rupert* and the

Solid character of the merchandise.

Imploy, which were to sail in the following spring, the following cargo was prescribed by Radisson and Captain Gillam :—

500 fowling pieces, and powder and shot in proportion.
500 brass kettles, 2 to 16 gallons apiece.
30 gross of knives.
2,000 hatchets.

But it is curious to note how this list of exports was continually added to. For instance, one of the Company on one occasion rose at the weekly meeting and stated that he had been told by an experienced Indian trader that scarlet cloth was very highly esteemed among the Indians.

"I hear," said he, "that an Indian will barter anything he possesses for a couple of yards of scarlet cloth and a few dyed feathers."

Whereupon, the chairman turned to the original adventurer in the region controlled by the Company.

"What does Mr. Radisson say to this?"

"I think," said Mr. Radisson, "that the honourable adventurer does not understand the Indian trade as well as I do. He forgets that Indians are of many races; and that what will suit the case and attract the cupidity of an Indian far to the south, will have little effect on the northern tribes. An Iroquois would think more of a brass nail than of twenty yards of scarlet cloth. In the north, where we have built a factory, the Indians are more peaceful; but they do not care much for kickshaws and coloured rags. They, too, esteem powder and shot and the means of discharging them. But they are just as fond, particularly Eskimaux, of knives and kettles and hatchets."

On a subsequent occasion, a third as many again of these implements were taken as cargo.

In the meantime, it was not to be supposed that the rumours of the great value put upon petty merchandise by the hyperborean savages, could fail to excite the cupidity of London merchants and dealers in these things. The ships that sailed in the spring of 1671 were besieged by peddlers and small dealers, who were

Ships besieged by peddlers.

prepared to adventure their property in the wilds. Not only the ships, but the houses selected for the Company's meetings were beset with eager throngs, praying the adventurers, collectively and individually, to act as middlemen for their trumpery merchandise.

Not only did the ships and the place of meeting suffer siege, but as many as thirty persons shipped out to Hudson's Bay in the first two voyages after the granting of the charter, while twenty-one of them returned in the next two vessels fully determined, apparently, to repeat a journey which had proved so lucrative.

To abate this nuisance, it was enacted that no persons would "hereafter be employed to stay in the country or otherwise but by consent of the Committee, nor any goods be put aboard the ships but with their knowledge and consent, to the end that the ships be not hereafter pestered as they were the last voyage."

This enactment may have had its rise in the dishonesty of these self-appointed adventurers. On several occasions on unshipping the cargo, boxes and barrels containing valuable furs would be found missing, or their loss would coincide with the disappearance of a reprobate who had joined the ship without a character.

Thus we read in the minutes that at one meeting it was ordered that enquiry be made as to sixty beaver skins, "very good and large, packed up with the others, in one of the casks, which were not found." One Jeremiah Walker, a second mate and supercargo was required to state which cask they were taken in, and his cross-examination reveals the loose and unbusiness-like methods then in vogue.

Nothing could be more entertaining than the character of these meetings, as compared with a modern board-meeting of a joint stock enterprise. A great air of mystery was kept up. The novelty of the undertaking was so great as to imbue the committee with a high sense of the importance and interest of their weekly conclaves. The length of the speeches bears witness to this spirit. A member had been

known to speak for a whole hour on the edifying theme as to whether the furs should be placed in barrels or boxes.

Vague rumours of these secret proceedings permeated the town. They became a standing topic at the places where men foregathered. To the popular imagination, the north was a land of fable. The denizens of those countries were invested with strange attributes and clothed in weird and wonderful garments. The Hudson's Bay Company dealt with picturesque monarchs and a fierce, proud and noble people, whose ordinary attire was the furs of sable, of ermine, of



ARMS OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

fox, and of otter; who made treaties and exacted tributes after the fashion of the ceremonial East. Petty chiefs and sachems were described as kings and emperors; the wretched squaws of a redskin leader as queens. It was, perhaps, only natural for a generation which banqueted its imagination on the seductive fable of a North-West Passage to confuse the Red Indians of North America with the inhabitants of the East; a very long period was to pass away before the masses were able to distinguish between the tawny-skinned

Indian of the North American continent and the swarthy servants of the East India Company. Nor were the masses alone sinners in this respect. The Indians of Dryden, of Congreve, of Steele, and even of writers so late as Goldsmith no more resembled the real Red-men than the bison of the western prairies was akin to the buffalo of the Himalayas.

For such reasons as these, the Adventurers kept their ways and their superior knowledge with superior discretion to themselves.

It was never known in the seventeenth century what actually constituted the original capital of the Adventurers.

Capital of the Company.

So small was it that when, in the course of the Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry in 1749, nearly eighty years after the Company had received its charter, the figures were divulged, the pettiness of the sum occasioned universal surprise. Each adventurer was apparently required to pay £300, sterling; and the gross sum was divided into thirty-four equal shares. Besides Prince Rupert's "sundry charges" (the euphemism employed to describe the sum paid him for his interest in obtaining the charter), his Highness was offered a share amounting to one equal share. "He having graciously signified his acceptance thereof," says the secretary in the minute-book, "credit given him for three hundred pounds." The capital thus stood at £10,500.

CHAPTER VII.

1671-1673.

Mission of the Pere Albanel—Apprehension at Fort Charles—Bailey's Distrust of Radisson—Expedition to Moose River—Groseilliers and the Savages—The Bushrangers Leave the Company's Service—Arrival of Governor Lyddal.

While the Honourable Company of Adventurers was holding its meetings in Mr. Alderman Horth's house, and gravely discussing its huge profits and its motley wares, an event was happening some thousands of miles away which was to decide the fate, for some years at least, of the two picturesque figures to whom the inception of the whole enterprise was due.

In August, 1671, M. Talon, the Intendant of New France, sent for a certain Father Albanel and a young friend of his, the Sieur de St. Simon, and after embracing them sent both forth on a perilous mission to the North. They were directed to "penetrate as far as the Mer du Nord; to draw up a memoir of all they would discover, drive a trade in fur with the Indians, and especially reconnoitre whether there be any means of wintering ships in that quarter." Such were the injunctions bestowed upon these hardy spirits on the eve of their errand. To recur to a theme already touched upon, if the French Government of the day had previously caused visits to be made to Hudson's Bay in the manner described several years later, all this knowledge would have been already acquired; and there would have been no necessity to despatch either priest or layman thither to make that discovery anew.

In the "Jesuit Relations" for 1672 is found Father Albanel's own narration of his journey:

Father Albanel's Journey.

"Hitherto this voyage had been considered impossible for Frenchmen, who, after having undertaken it three times and not having been able to surmount the obstacles, had seen themselves to abandon it in despair of success. What appears as impossible is found not to be so when it pleases

God. The conduct of it was reserved to me after eighteen years' prosecution that I had made, and I have very excellent proofs that God reserved the execution of it for me, after the singular favour of a sudden and marvellous, not to say miraculous, recovery that I received as soon as I devoted myself to this mission at the solicitation of my Superior; and in fact I have not been deceived in my expectation; I have opened the road, in company with two Frenchmen and six savages." Thus it is made apparent that so far as the Jesuits, pioneers of this country, were concerned, no knowledge of any of their compatriots having penetrated to Hudson's Bay had ever reached them. The letter that M. Talon was writing to his royal master is proof that he, too, was unaware of any prior discovery. No doubt remains that the worthy priest and the young chevalier, his servant, were the first party travelling overland from Quebec to penetrate into those regions and to behold that vast expanse of water.

The little band of English at Fort Charles, under Charles Bailey, who had been sent out as Governor of Rupert's Land by the Company, were soon made aware of the proximity of the French, and no one seems to have been more affected by the news than Radisson and Groseilliers. The two brothers-in-law indulged in many anxious surmises. Radisson offered to go and find out who the intruders were, but the Governor by no means favoured the idea. In those days, when national rivalries and prejudices were so intense, and especially so among the English middle classes, Bailey seems to have felt a great deal of distrust with regard to the two Frenchmen; and he early made up his mind to let them know his opinion and feel his authority. The two parties were continually at loggerheads; the Frenchmen naturally resenting the Governor's unjust suspicions, and the Governor retorting by a ponderous irony and a surly and continual surveillance of their speech and movements.

In the following year, 1673, the occupants of the Company's post, at Rupert's River, were made aware of the neighbourhood of their trade rivals in no pleasant manner. The Indians of the country round about began to show signs

of disaffection. On being questioned, some of the more friendly ones were induced to betray the cause. They had been informed by the Frenchmen, who in that and the previous years had reached the shores of the Bay, distant some twenty or thirty leagues, that the English were not to be trusted, that their firearms were bewitched, and their religion was that of the evil one. Peaceably inclined, the Nodwayes, who were the principal inhabitants of that region, fell an easy prey to the proselytism of the indomitable Jesuits, and many of their younger braves had journeyed to Quebec and taken part in the mission services there, and at Montreal, before the arrival of Dablon in their midst. But they were readily adaptable to the racial and commercial antagonisms of their teachers; and late in 1673 Governor Bailey was informed that they contemplated an attack on the fort

Rivals on the scene.



TYPE OF EARLY TRADING POST.
(From an old print.)

On this, the Company's servants began the task of strengthening their frail defences. The Governor alleged that he had received instructions from England to despatch Groseilliers to the other side of the Bay, called the "West Main." Radisson sought to accompany his kinsman, but was met with a peremptory refusal. This action by no means in-

creased the amity between him and his rather stupid and choleric superior. Nevertheless the winter passed without any open exhibition of hostility between the two men ; and it seemed likely that no difficulties would arise while the cold weather continued. The ground was, however, still covered with snow when several Indians appeared and asked to be allowed to take up their abode at the east end of the fort, that they might be ready for trade in the spring. Bailey, with his customary sagacity in such matters, suspected some treachery in this ; but on the active expostulations of Radisson the simple request was granted, and the Indians immediately proceeded to erect their wigwams. On the 25th of March, when the thaw commenced, six savages, announcing themselves as ambassadors from Kas-Kidi-dah, the chief of the tribe, (referred to by Bailey's secretary as "King Cusciddidah,") came to herald the approach of that potentate. It so chanced that both the Governor and Radisson were absent, having gone out to reconnoitre and to obtain an addition to their now slender stock of meat. In all these little expeditions the Governor and Radisson were inseparable. The former swore privately he could never bring himself to trust the fort in the hands of a Frenchman ; and, although there was no reason whatever to apprehend such consequences, the Governor constantly acted as if any such show of confidence on his part would emphatically jeopardize the interests of the Company.

Governor Bailey's distrust.

King Cusciddidah arrived on the following day. "His Majestie brought a retinue with him," records Thomas Gorst, the Governor's secretary, "but very little beaver, the Indians having already sent their best to Canada."

In the absence of the Governor, the occupants of the fort regarded Captain Cole as their superior. Cole did not place much confidence in the pacific mien of the savages surrounding the fort, and a guard was kept up night and day. Under cover of darkness two sailors were despatched to find the Governor ; but scarcely had they departed on their quest than Cusciddidah proposed that two of his Indians should

go on the same errand. The acting commandant of the fort could not well decline this offer, and on the 31st of March the second party returned, bringing with them the Governor. To the surprise of all Radisson did not accompany him. No explanation was offered; but the next day the rumour ran that they had quarrelled in the wilderness, that from words they came to blows, and that finally Radisson had attempted to shoot the Governor.

Filled with a natural alarm, Groseilliers made several attempts to obtain from Bailey the true story of the affair, but the Governor declined to affirm or confirm anything, saying that he had no doubt Groseilliers knew quite as much of the matter as himself. Groseilliers' anxiety, however, was considerably lessened when at a formal conference with the Indian king, held at the latter's wigwams near the fort, he learnt that the French had made a settlement not above eight days' journey from Rupert's River. Hither, in effect, Radisson had repaired; and afterwards from thence made his way back to Quebec. Of his subsequent adventures mention will be made later in the narrative.

Cusciddidah openly demanded the English protection. He declared his apprehension of being attacked by other Indians, whom the French had animated against the English and all who dealt with them. He even gave a description of the fort the French had erected on the banks of Moose River, and the contents of its store-house. Already the French were resorting to many artifices to hinder the natives from trading with the heretic pale-faces; they gave higher value for the furs brought them, and lost no opportunity of instilling into the minds of the Indians a far from flattering opinion of their trade rivals, the English.

First French rivalry.

One hearer received these tidings with complete equanimity. That which surprised and confounded his companions, filled the bosom of Chouart des Groseilliers with a secret joy. The Governor's high-handed deportment had oppressed, if it had not angered him; and he had, together with his brother-in-law, begun to suspect that this policy of enmity was dictated by a desire to rid himself and the Company

of them both. But in the proximity of the French he found a weapon of great utility in his relations with the Governor, his superior officer.

On the third of April a council was held, to debate upon the advisability of the Company's agents removing from Rupert's to Moose River, thus to prevent their traffic being intercepted by the French. The Governor adopted a tone of great cordiality towards Groseilliers, and listened with deference to his advice. Groseilliers boldly counselled giving up the present fort and establishing themselves close to the French. Bailey, much to Captain Cole's astonishment, instantly approved of the plan. In vain did Cole protest against the course as dangerous; the Governor professed his confidence in Groseilliers' wisdom, and ordered the sloop to be got ready for the journey



Bark Canoe of Indians on Hudson's Bay.

In the meantime the Indians in the neighbourhood of Fort Charles continued building their wigwams. They raised their wauscohegein or fort so near the English that the palisades joined. As their numbers increased, Groseilliers advised putting off their own expedition until the savages were gone hunting, so that Fort Charles and those left in charge might not be surprised in their absence. On the

20th of May, seven canoes containing more subjects of Cusciddidah arrived, bringing the news to the English that few, if any, Upland Indians might be expected to visit them that season, the French having persuaded them to journey with their goods to Canada instead. Indeed, said they, the tribes had already left, so that even if the English expedition were made, it would be fruitless.

At this depressing intelligence Bailey again sought Groseilliers' advice, and this being still in favour of advancing to Moose River, it was adopted. Before the departure, on the 27th of May, a band of about fifty men, women and children appeared, anxious to trade ; but instead of furs they offered wampum, feathers, and a few small canoes, for none of which merchandise the Company's agents had need. They were of the nation called Pishapocanoes, a tribe allied to the Esquimaux, and like them, a "poor, beggarly people ; by which," adds one of the party, "we may perceive the French ran away with the best of the trade."

Everything being now in readiness, the expedition started, but without Bailey. The Governor, at the last moment, decided to remain behind at Fort Charles and await their return.

The voyage across the Bay was made in safety, and on the very day of landing at the mouth of Moose River, a band of Tabiti Indians were encountered, from whom they obtained about two hundred pelts. The chief of this band denied that the French had bribed them or the other Indians not to trade with the English. They declared that as yet their intercourse had been almost entirely with the Jesuits, one of whom was Father Albanel, who had merely urged them to live on terms of friendship with the nations in league with the French. The chief blamed the English for trading with such pitiful tribes as Cusciddidah's and the Pishapocanoes, advising them instead to settle at Moose River, where, he asserted, the Upland Indians would come and trade with them.

First visit to Moose River.

One curious incident occurred in the course of this parley. The Tabiti chief, who had been for some time looking rather

sharply at Groseilliers, suddenly broke off the intercourse. When Captain Cole demanded the reason, the chief declared that it was on Groseilliers' account, whom he had recognized as the Frenchman with whom he had had dealings many years before. Groseilliers, nothing loth, stepped forward, and declared that the chief might possess himself in easiness on that score, as he was now to all intents and purposes an Englishman; and that he would always trade with the Tabitis as such.

"But you drove hard bargains," returned the chief. "You took our silkiest, softest and richest furs, and you gave us but beads and ribbons. You told us the skins of the sable, and marten, and beaver were of little account to you, whereas the English give us, and the French traders as well, guns and hatchets in exchange."

This harangue does not seem to have particularly disconcerted Groseilliers; he was an old Indian trader; he returned a polite answer, renewing his expressions of amity. Nevertheless, it made a profound impression upon the other members of the party, who reported to Bailey on their return that the Indians thought Groseilliers too hard on them, and refused to deal with him. Indeed, they did not scruple to assert that the comparative failure of their expedition was owing to Groseilliers' presence; that both the Tabitis and the Shechittiwans, hard by, were really possessed of peltries which they chose to conceal.

Bailey at Moose River.

On hearing this intelligence, Bailey himself was induced to set out for Moose River. By rare good fortune, he found the Tabitis reinforced by a numerous band of Shechittiwans, who had journeyed thither some fifty leagues and were eager to trade. From this tribe, the Governor procured no fewer than fifteen hundred skins on very good terms. Charmed with his adventure, he decided to pursue his course, discover the Chechouan River, and thence coast along the west shore of the Bay, to Port Nelson, where there was, as yet, no fort.

On the 18th of July, he arrived at Chechouan River, "where no Englishman had been before," but secured little or no

beaver. He treated with the chief of the tribe he found there and with his son, who exacted from him a promise that he would come with a ship and trade the next year. In return, they assured him they would provide a quantity of beaver and induce the Upland tribes to travel thence. Hardly had the sloop departed than, on the 27th, it ran upon a mass of floating ice and narrowly escaped foundering. This catastrophe precipitated the Governor's return to Rupert's River. He arrived to find Groseilliers and his protégé Gorst at daggers drawn, and the factors, traders and sailors almost at the point of mutiny, and all this because they objected to serve under a Frenchman.

Bailey now seems to have made up his mind what course to pursue with regard to Groseilliers; but if anything were wanting to complete his decision, he had not long to wait. On the next day but one, that is to say the 30th of August, a messenger came to him to announce the arrival of a canoe. In it was a Jesuit missionary, accompanied by one of Cusciddidah's own sons. The worthy priest was in a sorry condition with regard to his apparel, most of which he had either been robbed of or been compelled to barter for food during his long sojourn in the wilderness. He had left Quebec during the preceding October, but had been detained for many months owing to the impassability of the route. He bore with him letters; one of them for Mr. Bailey from the Governor of Quebec. This epistle seems to have given Bailey a great deal of pleasure, and as a communication from one great man to another, he caused it to be publicly read out in the fort. The French Governor desired Bailey to treat the priest civilly "on account of the amity between the two crowns"; and the bearer of this letter had no reason to complain of a lack of hospitality. He was clothed and entertained with great kindness.

Jesuit priest at Fort Charles.

Unhappily, on the very evening of his arrival, the Governor was made aware that the Jesuit had brought other letters, and that these had been delivered into the hands of Groseilliers. Always suspicious, he now became convinced of treachery. He saw in this harmless visit of a pious missionary a deep-laid

plot to capture the fort and allow it to be pillaged by the hostile Indians. He ordered Groseilliers to appear before him. But Groseilliers was not to be found, and Gorst returned to say that both the Frenchmen were out walking together. Bailey, taking several men with him, now went himself in search of the pair; he confronted Groseilliers, and hurled a host of accusations at his head. To these accusations, all ill-founded and ill-advised, Groseilliers very promptly responded by knocking the Governor down. He then returned calmly to the fort, demanded his wages and possessions, and calling three of the Indians to his side, including the young brave who had accompanied the priest, set off valiantly into the wilderness. In due time he reached Quebec, where he rendered a faithful account to the authorities of what had transpired. He also forwarded to England, by way of New England, a minute account of his experiences, which was duly read out at one of the meetings of the Company.

The Jesuit, who had offered to proceed with Groseilliers, had been detained. He seems to have made himself very useful to the English in their dealings with the Indians, although he was thoroughly distrusted, as was to be expected, by the Governor.

On the 24th of September, a sloop was descried in the river, which, with joy, they soon made out to be the *Prince Rupert*, just arrived from England. She was commanded by Captain Gillam, and with her came the new Governor, William Lyddal, to supersede Bailey. Captain Gillam reported that the sister-ship, the *Shaftesbury*, commanded by Captain Shepherd, was likewise at the mouth of the river. The new Governor's commission and instructions being read, all hands were immediately put to work, with the intention of unloading and reloading the ships for the return voyage immediately. Bailey seems to have expressed the greatest anxiety to proceed to London without delay; but at length he was induced to listen to reason. It was pointed out to him that the season would be far spent before the work of equipment could be properly concluded. After several councils, it was resolved

Arrival of the "Prince Rupert."

that they should winter at Rupert's River; and no effort was made to unload the vessels until the following spring. In the meantime, the crews were not idle. Under Lyddal's direction they found employment in cutting timber and building houses, more particularly a bake-house and a brew-house, which latter added greatly to the comfort of the fort.

CHAPTER VIII.

1673–1682.

Progress of the Company—Confusion as to the Names and Number of the Tribes—Radisson goes to Paris—His Efforts to Obtain Support there, and from Prince Rupert, in England, Fail—Arrival of M. de la Chesnaye—With his help Radisson Secures Support—And Sails for Quebec—Thence Proceeds with Two Ships to Attack the English Ports in Hudson's Bay—His Encounters with Gillam's Expedition from London, and his Son's, from New England.

Rapidly advancing in prosperity and reputation, and possessed of a basis of credit which gave it a welcome sense of solidity, the Company now renewed its efforts to extend its trade and settlements. The weekly meetings in Mr. John Horth's house, which were so full of mystery to the public, continued to bear fruit; and at length a regular system was determined for the organization and government of its distant dependencies.

All ships bound for Hudson's Bay were now ordered to visit Charlton Island, which lies about forty miles from the mouth of Rupert's River, in the extreme south of the Bay; and the island was also made a rendezvous whither all factors were to bring all their merchandise for the purpose of loading the Company's ships. The geography of the district had hitherto, in spite of the researches of a long series of explorers, beginning with Frobisher, and ending with Fox, remained obscure. But the Company's servants had not been idle, and the Adventurers were soon in possession of carefully drawn charts, and maps of the straits, the Bay itself, and the lands surrounding it. They kept themselves also well-advised by lists, drawings, and detailed descriptions, of the tribes inhabiting the territories granted to them under the charter; and the discussions which went on over this subject were not lacking in humour. It is worth observing that for a great many years during the early history of the Company, its Governors, captains, chief factors, chief traders, and the

Ignorance of the geography of Hudson's Bay.

rank and file of its employees could never by any chance agree, either as to the number or the characteristics of the aborigines. In concocting their reports many were animated purely by love of romance: others relied too implicitly on the tales told by the Indians themselves; others may be credited with being the victims of their own imaginations. Nor could the lists enumerating the tribes boast more consistency. Extracts from those of two governors may be given here for purposes of comparison:—

NATIONS VISITING HUDSON'S BAY.

Bailey, 1673:	Lyddal, 1678:
Esquemos,	Askimows,
Nodwayes,	Odwayes,
Twegwayes,	Twagions,
Pankeshones,	Paggarshows,
Noridgewelks,	Narchuels,
Abenekays,	Penkayes,
Micmacks,	Micmackes,
Kilistinons,	Crilistinons,
Assinapoils,	Ossa-poets,
Cuchneways,	Kitchenayes,
Algonkins,	Algonkings,
Outaways,	Otawayes,
Outagamis.	Wattagamais.

No wonder, therefore, that the Adventurers in England were puzzled, and that at one of their later meetings Prince Rupert was forced to exclaim:

"Gentlemen, these Indians" (each member had been supplied with Governor Nixon's list) "are not our Indians. 'Fore God, out of the nineteen I see only five we have dealt with before."

Another worthy member declared, on a similar occasion that the tribes frequenting the Bay were more volatile than the Bedouins. "These are not men, but chameleons"—was the remark of another adventurer.

The chief cause of the confusion lay in the variations of spelling. More than a century was to elapse before a common orthography was adopted, and in the interval it was impossible to fix the tribes by name with certainty. The name of no tribe perhaps underwent such vicissitudes of spelling and pronunciation as that described by the earliest Jesuit pioneers as the Ossa-poiles, which in our own day are known as the Assiniboines. They were in process of time the Poeles, Poets, the Pedlas, the Semplars, Oss-Semplars, Essapoils and the Simpoils.*

Confusion of tribes.

At a general court held to consider the action of Governor Bailey, the majority of the adventurers professed themselves rejoiced at having been quit of the services of the Sieurs Groseilliers and Radisson; yet there were not wanting others to openly regret the treatment these two men had received. As may be supposed, the most fervent of their advocates and defenders was Sir John Kirke, whose daughter had married Radisson, and who himself had lately been knighted by the king. He predicted some disaster to the Company from having dismissed these two faithful servants, and he was loud and persistent in asserting the bad faith and unjust suspicions of Bailey.

While the affairs of the Company were proceeding tranquilly at home, the conduct and employment of one of these two bushrangers was more enlivening. Chouart was passing his time in inactivity at Three Rivers. But his brother-in-law, after several ineffectual endeavours to establish a northern rivalry to the Company, had offered his services to the French Navy. This career, which at that period must have been, even for him, sufficiently eventful and exciting, was cut short by ship-wreck in 1679. Losing all his property, even to his clothing, Radisson made his way first to Brest and then to Paris. The Vice-Admiral and Intendant of the Fleet having written in his favour, the Court was pleased to grant him a sum of one hundred crowns, and hope was also held out to him that he would be honoured by the command of a frigate.

* Also known to-day as the Stone Indians.

In the meantime he was accorded leave to go to England to fetch his wife.

Madame Radisson, otherwise Mistress Mary Kirke, appears to have caused her husband a great deal of mortification and numerous disappointments. There is no doubt that her continued residence in England, in spite of her husband's return to the French service, made him an object of suspicion to the French Court. Once when he endeavoured, in a memorable interview with Colbert, to press upon that Minister his scheme for ousting the English from Hudson's Bay, the Minister responded coldly:

Radisson in France.

"M. Radisson, you are suspected of being in league with the English, your father-in-law is one of the members of the English Company; and your wife resides under his roof."

"I made him understand," declared Radisson long afterwards, "that, though married, I was not master of my wife. Her father would by no means consent to my bringing her to France with me."

These rebuffs determined him to make an attempt to better his worldly condition elsewhere. A true soldier of fortune, patriotism appears to have had little weight with him; he was as ready to serve under the English as the French. He returned to find his father-in-law more placable. Sir John had at this time certain claims against the French; and he doubtless fancied that Radisson might assist him in preferring these at the French Court. He took occasion to ask his father-in-law what chance there remained to him of again securing employment under the Company. "None, sir," replied Kirke, "both Bailey, Lyddal and others are against you and have poisoned the minds of their employers. Prince Rupert is, however, your friend, and also Captain Gillam; but one dislikes to speak openly, and the other dare not."

Acting on this intelligence, Radisson resolved to see Rupert. The prince received him kindly enough; he took pains to show him his collection of mezzotints, and to explain some of

his scientific curiosities. He even went so far as to condole with Radisson on the treatment he had received. But he had to point out that the temper of the Company was such that he feared it would be in vain for him to exercise his interest for his visitor's reinstatement.

Radisson, disappointed of his hopes, and frustrated in his desire to return with his wife, did not meet with a warm welcome on the other side of the Channel. Colbert received him with black looks; and the suspicions which gathered about him were now strengthened rather than dissipated. In this extremity he repaired to the Marquis de Seignely, to whom he set forth substantially the same plan which he had cherished for years, of opening out the trade of the North, with the additional attraction now of dislodging the English from a commerce which had already proved vastly profitable. Seignely listened with interest, and requested time to reflect on the matter. At the second interview Radisson was not overwhelmed with disappointment, for he had expected no other issue; he was told flatly that he was regarded by the king as little better than a traitor; and that his Canadian project met with universal distrust.

Plan to dislodge the Company.

The outlook seemed discouraging indeed, when happily at this juncture there arrived in Paris M. de la Chesnaye, who was in charge of the fur-trade in Canada, as the head of the Compagnie du Nord. This event proved Radisson's salvation. He learned with great rejoicing that La Chesnaye's visit to France was actuated by a desire to report upon the intrusion of the English Company. La Chesnaye proved a true friend; he evinced himself most heartily in favour of the Government securing the services of Radisson in establishing a rival establishment, on the principle of those of the Company to which he had formerly been attached.

Many consultations took place, both Seignely and Chesnaye listening with great interest while Radisson explained the equipment and merchandise of the Hudson's Bay Company, which he strongly advised should be taken as a pattern in all practical extensions of the French fur-trade in those regions.

The only difficulty now presenting itself was to find money for the enterprise. The exchequer of the Court was at a low ebb; and it had a thousand calls upon its charity and liberality. Radisson must wait even for the few hundred crowns he so sadly needed for his passage to New France and his personal needs. There was, however, one force in France which could always be approached with a good courage when any enterprise in a new country required support, and always with success. It was the power which, though it had endured a thousand disappointments and sacrificed a thousand lives, and as many fortunes, in the attempt to teach the Gospel of Jesus in the wilderness, had adhered without wavering to its faith in the ultimate victory of the Cross over the savage nature of the Indians. No adventurer, if he had but a sufficiently plausible story, need turn away empty-handed from the door of the Jesuits. To the Jesuits of Paris Radisson presented himself as a good Catholic seeking to subvert the designs of the heretic English. He applied for assistance, and he was at length rewarded for his pains by a sum of five hundred crowns.

Radisson assisted by the Jesuits.

But nearly two years had passed before this assistance was procured. Radisson's debts had accumulated; his creditors were clamouring about him, threatening him with the sponging-house; no effort to elude them met with success, and at length he found himself at Rochelle, with scarce twenty crowns in his pocket over and above the cost of his passage. It was then that he made the resolve to reimburse the Jesuits, "if he should live to be worth so great a sum," and it is interesting to discover that two years later he kept his word. At present he could only trust to La Chesnaye, who was anxiously awaiting his arrival in Quebec. Thither Radisson arrived on the 25th of September, 1681.

La Chesnaye showed much joy at seeing his friend; for in truth his own plans for seeking to share the northern trade of the English were nearly ripe. He declared that there was no time to be lost; but that in spite of the urgency of the matter the greatest circumspection would have to be observed, as

Frontenac by no means desired to compromise the king without first seeing his way clear.

But if the Governor whose career was about to close was punctilious, the Intendant Duchesneau was not. He had already dispatched a memoir to his superior relating to Hudson's Bay, and to what he believed to be the French rights there.

"They" (the English) he wrote, "are still on Hudson's Bay on the north and do great damage to our fur-trade. The farmers [of the revenue] suffer in consequence by this diminution of the trade at Tadoussac, and throughout the entire country, because the English drive off the Outaoua nations. For the one and the other design they have two forts on the said Bay—the one towards Tadoussac and the other at Cape Henrietta Marie, on the side of the Assinibonetz. The sole means to prevent them succeeding in what is prejudicial to us in this regard would be to drive them by main force from that Bay, which belongs to us. Or, if there would be an objection in coming to that extremity, to construct forts on the rivers falling into the lakes, in order to stop the Indians at these points."

Duchesneau protests against English encroachments.

The zealous Intendant declared that should King Lewis adopt the resolution to arrange with the Duke of York for his possessions in that quarter, "in which case Boston could not resist," Canada would be ruined, "the French being naturally inconsistent and fond of novelty."

Finding, however, that they could obtain no official recognition of the enterprise, La Chesnaye at length resorted to a transparent fiction in order to account for Radisson's departure—a subterfuge which was the more necessary since many had begun to suspect his destination and urged the Governor to do nothing which would bring down on them the enmity of the English and their allies, the Iroquois. He requested the Governor, if he would not countenance an expedition with license to trade on the shores of the Bay, to grant Radisson formal permission to return to France by way of New England in a vessel belonging to the Government of

Acadia, which at that moment lay in the St. Lawrence ready to sail.

It was arranged privately that after his departure Radisson should proceed in this vessel only as far as Isle Percée in the Gulf, near the mouth of the river, and there await his kinsmen Groseilliers, his nephew Chouart, and the two ships which La Chesnaye was even then busily fitting out. Thus all official cognizance of the expedition would be avoided.

The terms agreed upon were, that in return for La Chesnaye's equipment, Radisson and Groseilliers were, provided certain conditions were carried out, to receive jointly half the profits of the venture, and La Chesnaye the other half. What these conditions were can only be guessed; but beyond all question, they concerned the capture or spoliation of the English trading posts on the Bay. Radisson took with him his nephew, Jean Baptiste, who had passed nearly the whole of his life among the Indians as a *coureur de bois;* the pilot, Pierre Allemand, and an old bushranger named Godefrey, who was well acquainted with the Indians of the northern regions. Groseilliers was to remain behind until the spring, when he was to have the command of the smaller of the two vessels. On the 4th of November the advance guard of the expedition directed against the Company's establishment in Hudson's Bay left Quebec.

Company's enemies leave Quebec.

In the following spring the rendezvous was kept at the island named. Radisson is found complaining bitterly of the character of the vessels *St. Pierre* and *St. Anne.* The former he describes as an old craft of 50 tons only, "with twelve men of a crew, including those with me. There were goods enough for the trade aboard her," he adds, "but so scanty a supply of provisions that if I had not been so deeply engaged I should not venture on the enterprise."

If his case was scarcely hopeful, that of his brother-in-law was far worse. The latter's vessel could boast but little more than half the tonnage, and while her crew was larger by three men, she carried even fewer supplies. But Radisson and Groseilliers were not men to shrink from any enterprise

because it seemed hazardous. They had led bold, reckless lives, and their spirits rose at the prospect of danger. It was afterwards alleged of this pair that one great cause of their disagreement with the Company was their absolute inability to remain quiet and content in the enjoyment of a regular traffic. Such a career seemed to their bold, energetic dispositions worthier of drapers' apprentices. It is said they counselled the Company not to think of establishing one or two trading posts and expect the Indians to come to them for trade, but to push on in the wilderness to the north and west, building new depots and stirring up the hunters to greater activity and more profitable results. Had this advice been followed, the exploration of the great North-West would not only have been anticipated by almost a century; but by the occupation of its territory, the great evils of a later day would have been averted; nor would anyone in England have challenged the Company's right to an exclusive trade in the regions granted by its charter.

Rejected advice of Radisson and Groseilliers.

But the Company was soon to learn that its earliest pioneers and forerunners were not to be cast off with impunity. The two bushrangers experienced considerable difficulty at the outset in propitiating and calming the fears of their crews, who were terrified, and not without reason, at the prospect of a voyage of 900 leagues in such craft as the *St. Pierre* and the *St. Anne*, and amidst rough water and ice. But they at length succeeded and effected a start.

After nineteen days the crew of Groseilliers' ship mutinied. Groseilliers' attempts to appease them seemed about to end in signal failure when the man on watch cried out that a vessel was in sight to windward. Groseilliers seized his opportunity; "See!" he cried, pointing to the distant barque, "yonder is one of the English Company, laden with the profits of their trade in the Bay. Every man has his pocket full of gold and his stomach full of rum; and we shall have the same if we are not cowards enough to abandon our voyage."

After innumerable episodes, some of which almost ended in tragic consequences, Radisson at last, on the 26th of August, arrived on the west coast of Hudson's Bay. On the following day he was joined by his brother-in-law in the *St. Anne* at the mouth of a river named by the Indians Ka-kirka-kiouay, translated by Radisson as "who goes, who comes."

Twelve days before their arrival another ship had entered this same river, commanded by none other than Captain Gillam, and having on board John Bridgar, commissioned as Governor of the new settlement at Port Nelson.

Having thus entered the river, they advanced fifteen miles up stream, and Radisson then left Groseilliers to build a fort, while he himself departed in search of savages with whom to trade. With him he took his nephew and Godefrey, all three being well armed with muskets and pistols. In the course of eight days they accomplished forty leagues and attained the upper part of the river, though without meeting a single savage. On the eighth day, however, their eyes were rejoiced by the sight of a large encampment of Indians, who, while not especially rich in furs, were eager to conclude a treaty with the French, and to encourage their settlement in the country. Radisson now decided to return, accompanied by some of the savages, and on the 12th day of September rejoined his brother-in-law, whose fort he found pretty well advanced.

Hardly had he returned when the sudden booming of a cannon startled the settlement. It was the first time the Indians had ever heard the sound, and they expressed much astonishment and apprehension. While the two adventurers hastened to re-assure their allies, they were themselves hardly less disturbed. Radisson made up his mind to immediately ascertain whence the firing came and with this intention he embarked in a canoe and went to the mouth of the river. In passing to the opposite bank of the stream, and while in the vicinity of a small island, they perceived signs of European habitation. A tent had been erected, and at that moment a log house was being built. After a stealthy recon-

The younger Gillam discovered.

noitre, lasting the whole night, Radisson and his companions advanced boldly in the morning from the opposite shore in their canoe. The islanders were engaged in making a repast when Radisson attracted their attention. Speaking first to them in French, and finding that none of them understood, he thereupon addressed them in English. He asked them what was their business in those parts.

Their leader quickly responded: "We are English, and come for the beaver trade."

"By whose authority," asked Radisson; "do you possess a commission?" The other replied that he did not himself possess such a document, but that his father did, and that he and his companions hailed from New England. Whereupon Radisson, still seated in his canoe at some distance from the shore, informed them that they had not a shadow of right to be in those regions, which he himself had discovered and settled for the French some years before. He drew upon his imagination so far as to intimate that he was at that moment in command of a large force of Frenchmen near at hand, who would effectually maintain the sovereignty of King Lewis and his exclusive trading right in this territory; and he concluded his harangue, which was delivered almost at the top of his voice, by advising the party of New Englanders to embark as soon as possible and to return from whence they came.

Before any reply could be made, a cry broke from the lips of both the leaders. The canoe had touched the bank, and they recognized one another. The New Englander was the son of Radisson's old friend Gillam; and, as may be supposed, he possessed a very high admiration for a man of whom he had heard so much. They speedily embraced, but Radisson is careful to inform us that he did not entirely trust his young friend. When young Gillam's ship appeared at the mouth of the river, and he was invited to go on board, he did so, but he took the precaution of insisting upon two Englishmen being left as hostages on shore. It was not without misgivings that, as he neared the vessel in their canoe, he observed the captain posting the English emblem and likewise discharging a number of cannon shots.

"I told him," says Radisson, "that it was not necessary to fire any more, for fear of causing jealousy amongst our people, who might show themselves hostile. He proposed that we should negotiate together. I promised that I would persuade our other officers to consent that, since the season was already too far advanced for them to withdraw, he should pass the winter where he was without their doing him any mischief.

In short Radisson was resolved at all costs to keep up appearances. He even went so far as to grant Gillam formal permission to continue building his house, "barring fortifications," and to guarantee him against insults from the Indians, over whom he professed to have absolute power. The two men parted on good terms; and perhaps Gillam's complaisance was well-advised. Radisson confesses that had the English shown themselves refractory or exhibited any disposition to assert rights over the country, it was his firm intention to concert a plan for seizing their ship, which he observes, was an "excellent prize" inasmuch it held no commission or warrant to trade from any power.

It afterwards appeared that this enterprise of the New England ship was set on foot by Gillam senior, who, dissatisfied with his profits under the Company, sought to adventure an expedition on his own account from Boston. He was destined to pay the penalty for this indiscretion.

Happy at having come out of this encounter so easily, Radisson and his party re-embarked in their canoe and struck out northwards. Another surprise was in store for them. A ship under full sail was on the point of entering the river. More strategy was necessary. The party regained the shore and instantly kindled a huge bonfire, upon which they cast grass and leaves so as to produce a thick column of smoke. Their purpose was to attract the attention and arrest the progress of the vessel and in this they succeeded. Believing they had come upon an Indian settlement, and anxious to reconnoitre before proceeding farther, the parties aboard the ship cast anchor immediately and so remained motionless in the channel all night.

Arrival of Bridgar.

Early in the morning they saw that a boat was being lowered from the ship, and while it was filling with occupants Radisson made ready to receive them. Each of his party was posted, armed, at the entrance to the wood, while Radisson himself walked down to the shore to greet the strangers.

They were soon within hail. Radisson set up a loud cry, Indian fashion, for the purpose of eliciting a response. He was disappointed in this; for the boat approached steadily and silently; there was a movement of the oars, but most of the figures appeared stern and motionless. The boat grounded ten yards from where Radisson stood with folded arms, and a general attitude of defiance. One of the crew had got a leg over the side of the boat when our bushranger cried out in a loud voice:

"Hold, in the King's name." And then presenting his carbine, "I forbid you to land."

The occupants of the boat were astonished.

"Who are you?" they asked, "and what is your business?"

"I am a Frenchman," was the answer, delivered in English; "and I hold this country for his Most Christian Majesty, King Lewis!"

Radisson signalled to his followers, who emerged from their retreat, making a brave show of their weapons. The *coup* seemed destined to be successful. The leader of the boat party, visibly impressed, remained standing up in his craft without any attempt on the part of his followers to land.

"I beg to inform you, gentlemen, that we hail from London. Our ship yonder is the *Prince Rupert*, belonging to the honourable Hudson's Bay Company and commanded by Captain Zachary Gillam."

"You arrive too late. This country is already in the possession of the King of France, and its trade belongs to the Northern Company of Canada."

A short dispute succeeded. Suddenly changing his tactics, Governor Bridgar, for it was no other, feigned acquiescence, admitted that after all Radisson might be right, and requested the privilege of landing and saluting him.

The two leaders now conversed amicably. Radisson took occasion to elaborate the narrative to which he had recently treated young Gillam, without, however, mentioning the circumstance of his having met the latter. He did not scruple to allege a lengthy residence in the region, detailing his forces, both French and Indian, with a fine display of exactitude. Commenced on shore, the interview was transferred to the ship; Radisson, while accepting Bridgar's hospitality, took care to keep, as before, two or three hostages on land. On board the *Prince Rupert* he embraced Gillam, and listened with a real interest to the tidings he had to convey of what had been happening in Europe, and of the affairs of the Company. For himself, he readily volunteered the information that he and his brother-in-law Groseilliers had two fine large vessels in the vicinity, while the third was shortly expected. He likewise made no secret of the fact that a huge fort was being constructed hard by in the interests of the French Company. In all of these statements Governor Bridgar professed absolute credence, whatever may have been his private opinion of their value.

The Bushranger's mendacity.

In reality, however, he was not deceived; and if it had not been for Radisson's precaution as to the hostages, there is some reason to believe he would have detained his guest on board the Company's ship to ruminate for a while on his treachery to the Company. Even allowing for the truth of Radisson's assertions regarding the occupation by the French of Port Nelson and the surrounding neighbourhood in large numbers, Bridgar was not to be dissuaded by mere words from his intention to establish a factory there. He had every confidence in the Company's rights; and he determined to carry out his instructions to the letter.

No sooner had Radisson departed, therefore, than a majority of the people on board the *Prince Rupert* landed and commenced building a fort.

The French party hiding in the woods spied on their movements; and before rejoining their comrades at their own settlement they had the privilege of seeing the erection of Fort Nelson, the fourth establishment of the Company in the Hudson's Bay territories, well under way.

CHAPTER IX.

1682-1683.

Death of Prince Rupert—The Company's Difficulty in Procuring Proper Servants — Radisson at Port Nelson — The two Gillams — Their Meeting—Capture of the New England Party—The First Scotchman in the Bay—Governor Bridgar Carried off Prisoner—Indian Visitors to the Fort—Disasters to the Ships—The French Burn the Island Fort—Radisson's Harangue to the Indians—Return to France.

On the 28th of November, 1682, at his house in Spring Garden, died the first Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. The prince had been in ill-health for some time, he was in his sixty-third year; and he had lived a stirring and adventurous life. His demise occasioned general regret, more amongst the people than at Court; for, as a writer of that day observed, "he had of late years proved a faithful counsellor to the King, but a greater patriot to English liberty; and therefore was towards his latter end neglected by the Court to that degree that nothing passed between him and his great relations but bare civilities in the common forms." On the sixth of the ensuing month his body was privately interred among others of the Royal Family in a vault in Westminster Abbey.

Death of Prince Rupert

A week later there was held a General Court of the Company, at which the Duke of York was chosen to succeed Rupert in the governorship. Besides the Duke himself, his Royal Highness the Duke of Albemarle, Lord Arlington and Mr. Hays, all delivered enthusiastic panegyrics on the deceased prince, rightly attributing to his zeal, judgment and enterprise, the successful establishment of the Company. And the meeting then adjourned out of regret for the dead Governor without proceeding to further business.

More than fifteen years had elapsed since Medard Chouart des Groseilliers had first fired Prince Rupert with his project of founding a great fur-traffic in the unknown and unexplored regions of the New World. The prince had lived to see that project succeed even beyond his most sanguine

expectations. Now, at his death, the Company owned four ships; and after all the cost of its plant, its ships and its equipment had been paid, it was returning an annual profit of two hundred per cent. on its capital. It was well-known that his Highness favoured greater activity, and one of his last acts had been to sign the commission of John Bridgar as Governor of the new settlement at Port Nelson. But during his own Governorship, the Company, feeling, no doubt, that they must balance the Prince's zeal for adventure with considerable caution, opposed the policy of rapid expansion with somewhat excessive prudence; and it was only after his death that they felt confident in pursuing a more vigorous and enterprising plan of commerce.

Under date of April 27th, 1683, while the drama between the French and English was being enacted at Port Nelson, the following instructions were addressed to Governor Sargeant, regarding trade with the interior: "You are to choose out from amongst our servants such as are best qualified with strength of body and the country language to travel and to penetrate into the country, and to draw down the Indians by fair and gentle means to trade with us."

But the Company was to learn that the parsimony which then characterized its policy was not calculated to foster the success of its aims. The majority of the men it sent out from England could not be classified under the head of adventurous spirits, ready to dare all for mere excitement and the prospect of gain. They were for the most part young men gifted with no more aptitude for the work in the wilderness than a disinclination to pursue their callings at home. No small number were dissatisfied apprentices; one William Evans had been a drawer at the Rainbow Inn; Portman had sent his scullion.

Even at that early day the staffs employed on the plantations were recruited from amongst the very class least competent to exploit those regions. The majority of the applicants for employment in the Company's service in the seventeenth century were not men of character and vigour, or even of robust physique, but rather hare-brained artisans of

the wild, dare-devil type, whose parents and friends foresaw for them, if London or Bristol formed the sphere of their talents, a legal and violent rather than a natural termination of their respective careers.

Sargeant's response to the foregoing injunction certainly served to enlighten his superiors. "I shall not be neglectful," he wrote, "as soon as I can find any man capable and willing to send up into the country with the Indians, to endeavour to penetrate into what the country will and may produce, and to effect their utmost in bringing down the Indians to our factory; but your Honours should give good encouragement to those who undertake such extraordinary service; or else I fear that there will be but few that will embrace such employment."

Company's encouragement requested.

The rebuke may have been just; but it seems to have given offence to some of the more pompous members of the Company; and Sargeant was desired not to cast any further reflection on his employers in his communications to them. Nevertheless, the Company was soon to learn the value of a less niggardly policy.

Meanwhile for ten days the two ex-employees, Radisson and Groseilliers, gave no further evidence to the English at the new settlement on Nelson River of their presence. But on the tenth day their curiosity and uneasiness regarding the conduct of the English Governor, Bridgar, and the other servants of the Company, had reached such a pitch that it was decided without further consideration that Radisson should start off at once to reconnoitre their behaviour. The actual distance between Fort Bourbon, on the Hays River, and the Company's factory on Nelson River was not above fifty miles; but owing to the dangerous character of the river, and the necessity for delay before an attempt could be made to cross it, Radisson and his party consumed fourteen days on the journey.

On their arrival on the 3rd of February, one of the first objects to attract their attention was the *Prince Rupert*, stuck fast in the ice and mud about a mile from where the factory

was being erected. At the same time they met the Governor, who was out on a hunting expedition with the chief mate of the vessel. Satisfying himself that no treachery was intended, Radisson accepted Bridgar's invitation to enter the log-house which he had caused to be built for his own occupation. Radisson introduced one of the Frenchmen who accompanied him as the captain of an imaginary ship, which he averred had arrived from France in his behalf. "Mr. B. believed it and anything else I chose to tell him," remarks Radisson naively, "I aiming always to prevent him from having any knowledge of the English interloper." While engaged in the pleasing diversion of drinking each other's health, a number of musket shots were fired. The crew of the vessel not taking any notice of this, the bushranger concluded that those on board were not on their guard and might readily be surprised.

Bridgar's credulity.

With this condition uppermost in his mind, the Frenchman quitted Bridgar, having first allayed any suspicion which might have naturally arisen as to the intention of the party. The latter went boldly on board the ship, and no hindrance being offered, their leader had a colloquy with Captain Gillam. The latter, while he received the visit civilly enough, found occasion to let Radisson know that he was far from entirely trusting him. When his visitor suggested that he was running a great risk in allowing the *Prince Rupert* to remain grounded, Gillam bluntly requested Radisson to mind his own business, adding that he knew perfectly well what he was doing—a boast which, as the sequel showed, was certainly not well founded. Radisson was determined not to be put out of temper, and so run risk of spoiling his plans.

Winter, even in all its rigour, seems to have had no terrors for our indomitable bushranger. For the next two months, as we shall see, he continued to scour backwards and forwards through the country, inspiring his followers and urging them onward to the prosecution of a plan which was obvious to them all. After parting from Gillam the elder, who had not the faintest suspicion that his son was in the locality, Radisson at once started to parley with Gillam, the younger.

When he had regained the island which he had left, he was instantly made aware that the New Englanders had been considerably less idle than the Company's servants; having completed a very creditable fort and mounted it with six pieces of cannon. With Benjamin Gillam, our bushranger passed off the same subterfuge with which he had hoodwinked Zachary. He spoke fluently of his newly arrived ship and her cargo and crew, and to cap his narrative, proceeded to introduce her captain, who was none other than the old pilot, Pierre Allemand, who, from the description still extant of his appearance, looked every inch the bold, fierce and uncompromising mariner. He had a great deal to tell Benjamin likewise of the Company's post near by, which he said contained forty soldiers.

"Let them be forty devils," exclaimed Gillam, junior, "we have built a good fort and are afraid of nothing."

Whereupon Radisson gently reminded him that according to his agreement he was to have built no fort whatever. In reply to this Benjamin begged his visitor not to take umbrage at such a matter, as he never intended to dispute the rights of the French in the region; and the fort was merely intended as a defence against the Indians.

As the evening wore on, a manœuvre suggested itself to Radisson. He resolved to bring father and son together.

A manœuvre of Radisson's.

No sooner had he formed this amiable resolve than he revealed to Benjamin Gillam the proximity of the *Prince Rupert* and her commander, and described the means by which an encounter might be effected without eliciting the suspicions of Governor Bridgar or any of the Company's servants. It consisted briefly in young Benjamin's disguising himself as a Frenchman and a bushranger. The scheme met with the young man's hearty approbation and the details were settled as Radisson had designed.

On the following day the party set out through the snow. Arriving at the point of land opposite to which the Company's ship lay, Radisson posted two of his best men in the woods on the path which led to the factory. He instructed

them to allow the Governor to pass should he come that way, but that if he returned from the ship unaccompanied or prior to their own departure they were to seize and overpower him on the spot. With such precautions as these, Radisson felt himself safe and went on board the *Prince Rupert* accompanied by Gillam. He introduced his two companions into the captain's room without any notice on the part of Gillam the elder, and the mate and another man he had with him. Leaning across the table, upon which was deposited a bulky bottle of rum, Radisson whispered to the honest captain that he had a secret of the highest importance to communicate if he would but dismiss the others. Gillam readily sent away the mate, but would not dismiss his second attendant until Radisson, again in a whisper, informed him that the black-bearded man in the strange head-gear was his son.

Meeting of father and son.

After communicating this intelligence the pair had their own way. The next few moments were devoted to embraces and to an interchange of news, for Captain Gillam and Benjamin had not met for two years. The sire could not refrain from imparting to his son that he was running a great risk; he declared it would be ruinous to him if it got to the Governor's ears that there was any collusion between them. Radisson again professed his friendship, but added that in his opinion neither of the parties had any right to be where they were, he having taken possession for the King of France. "This territory is all his Most Christian Majesty's," he said. "The fort we have built yonder we call Fort Bourbon, and none have any right here but such as own allegiance to Lewis XIV." He observed that nothing would cause a rupture of the friendly relations now subsisting between French and English but the trade in peltries, trade which he had too great reason to fear they hoped to initiate with the Indians in the spring.

The elder Gillam coolly responded that the ship he commanded, and the spot on which they were then assembled, luckily belonged not to himself, but to the Hudson's Bay Company.

"With regard to the trade, gentlemen," said he, "you have nothing to fear from me. Even though I don't carry a solitary beaver back to the Thames, I shall not trouble myself, being sure of my wages."

This interview was prolonged. The healths of the Kings of France and England, Prince Rupert and M. Colbert (quite in ignorance of the death of the two last named) were drunk with zeal and enthusiasm. In the midst of all this, that which Radisson had anticipated, occurred. Governor Bridgar, notified of Radisson's return, came to the ship in hot haste. On his joining the group, he remarked meaningly that the fort the French had constructed must be nearer than he had been given to think, since its commandant could effect so speedy a return. He evinced himself very uneasy in mind concerning the Frenchman's intentions. Before their departure, young Gillam came very near being betrayed. He was partially recognized by one of the traders who accompanied the Governor. But the matter passed off without serious consequences.

Gillam nearly betrayed.

None too soon did the party return to young Gillam's fort on the island, for a tremendous blizzard ensued, sweeping the whole country, and forcing Radisson to remain for some days within doors. As soon as the storm had subsided, however, Radisson started off, declining Gillam's offer of his second mate to accompany him back to the French settlement.

"I managed to dissuade him," he writes, "having my reasons for wishing to conceal the road we should take. On leaving we went up from the fort to the upper part of the river, but in the evening we retraced our steps and next morning found ourselves in sight of the sea, into which it was necessary to enter in order to pass the point and reach the river in which was our habitation. But everything was so covered with ice that there was no apparent way of passing farther. We found ourselves, indeed, so entangled in the ice that we could neither retreat nor advance towards the shore to make a landing. It was necessary, however, that we should pass through the ice or perish. We remained in this

condition for four hours without being able to advance or retire and in great danger of our lives. Our clothes were frozen on us and we could only move with difficulty; but at last we made so strong an attempt that we arrived at the shore, our canoe being all broken up. Each of us took our baggage and arms, and marched in the direction of our habitation without finding anything to eat for three days, except crows and birds of prey, which are the last to leave these countries."

Fort Bourbon was reached at length. After reporting to his brother-in-law all that had passed, Groseilliers was not long in counselling what was best to be done. In his opinion the first thing necessary was to secure possession of young Gillam's ship. Time pressed and the spring would soon be upon them, bringing with it the advent of the Indians. He argued that delay might prove fatal, inasmuch as Bridgar might at any moment learn of the presence of the New England interlopers; and in that event he would probably make an effort to capture their fort and add their forces to his own. If this were done, the success of the French in overpowering the English traders would be slight and their voyage would have been undertaken for nothing.

It was therefore agreed that Groseilliers should remain in charge of the fort, while his kinsman should immediately return to Nelson River. In a few days they parted once more, Radisson setting out with a fresh party and thoroughly resolved upon action. The first discovery he made, on arriving at the scene of his proposed operations, was that the Company's ship, the *Prince Rupert*, was frozen fast in the ice, and must inevitably perish when the spring floods came. He also speedily ascertained that the Governor, by no means relishing his presence in the vicinity, was already planning measures to thwart, if not to capture, his rivals, for he had sent out two sailors charged with the task of discovering the exact whereabouts of the French and the extent of their strength and equipment.

Calamity to the Company's ship.

These two spies Radisson promptly captured—no difficult

task indeed, for they had lost their way and were half-frozen and almost famished. The anticipated fate of the *Prince Rupert* was not long delayed. The tidings shortly reached Radisson that she was a total wreck, and with it came also the news of the loss of her captain, the mate and four sailors. A subsequent report, however, declared that Gillam had escaped with his life.

Receiving this intelligence, Radisson presented himself before the Governor to see how he was affected by such a calamity.

He found Bridgar drinking heavily, but resolved to keep up appearances and to withhold from the French any knowledge of what had happened. He affected to believe the ship safe, merely observing that she had shifted her position a few leagues down the river. Radisson asserts that at this time the Company's factory was short of provisions. It is impossible that this could have been the case. The assertion was probably made to cover his own depredations on the stores of the Company.

Parting from the Governor, Radisson presented himself before Gillam the younger, to whom he did not as yet choose to say anything concerning his father and the loss of his ship. Under various pretences he induced Gillam to pay him a visit at Fort Bourbon. The latter does not seem at this time to have been aware of the intention of the French towards him. But he was soon to be undeceived.

"I remained quiet for a month," says Radisson, in the course of his extraordinary narrative, "treating young Gillam, my new guest, well and with all sorts of civilities, which he abused on several occasions. For having apparently perceived that we had not the strength I told him, he took the liberty of speaking of me in threatening terms behind my back, treating me as a pirate and saying that in spite of me he would trade in spring with the Indians. He had even the hardihood to strike one of my men, which I pretended not to notice; but, having the insolence later, when we were discussing the privileges of New England, to speak against the respect due the best of kings, I treated him as a worthless

dog for speaking in that way and told him that, having had the honour to eat bread in his service, I would pray to God all my life for his Majesty. He left me, threatening that he would return to his fort and that when he was there I would not dare to speak to him as I had done. I could not expect to have a better opportunity to begin what I had resolved to do. I told this young brute then that I had brought him from his fort, that I would take him back myself when I pleased, not when he wished. He answered impertinently several times, which obliged me to threaten that I would put him in a place of safety if he was not wiser. He asked me then if he was a prisoner. I said I would consider it and that I would secure my trade since he threatened to interrupt it. I then withdrew to give him time to be informed by the Englishmen how his father's life was lost with the Company's ship, and the bad situation of Mr. Bridgar. I left in their company a Frenchman who understood English, unknown to them. When I had left, young Gillam urged the Englishman to fly, and to go to his master and assure him that he would give him six barrels of powder and other supplies if he would undertake to deliver him out of my hands. The Englishman made no answer, but he did not inform me of the proposition that had been made him (I had learned that from the Frenchman, who had learned everything and thought it was time to act for my security)."

Radisson's threats.

In the evening Radisson said nothing of what he knew of the plot. He asked those in his train if the muskets were in their places, which he had put around to act as guarantee against surprise. At the word *musket* young Gillam, who did not know what was meant, grew alarmed and, according to Radisson, wished to fly, believing that it was intended to kill him. But his flight was arrested by his captor, who took occasion to free him from his apprehension. The next morning, however, the bushranger's plans were openly divulged. He told Gillam that he was about to take his fort and ship.

" He answered haughtily that even if I had a hundred men I could not succeed, and that his people would have killed

more than forty before they could reach the palisades. This boldness did not astonish me, being very sure that I would succeed in my design."

Having secured Gillam the younger, it was now necessary to secure the fort of which he was master. The intrepid Frenchman started for Hays' Island with nine men, and gaining an entrance by strategy, he cast off the mask of friendship and boldly demanded the keys of the fort and the whole stock of arms and powder. He added that in the event of their refusal to yield he would raze the fort to the ground. No resistance seems to have been attempted, and Radisson took formal possession of the place in the name of the King of France. This ceremony being concluded, he ordered Jenkins, the mate, to conduct him to the ship, and here formal possession was taken in the same fashion, without any forcible objection on the part of the crew. Some explanation of this extraordinary complaisance, if Radisson's story of the number of men he took with him be true, may be found in the commander's unpopularity, he having recently killed his supercargo in a quarrel.

Hays' Island fort.

Nevertheless, Benjamin Gillam was not to be altogether without friends.

A certain Scotchman, perchance the first of his race in those regions, which were afterwards to be forever associated with Scottish zeal and labours, wishing to show his fidelity to his chief, escaped, and eluding the efforts of the fleetest of the French bushrangers to catch him, he arrived at Fort Nelson and told his tale. The Governor's astonishment may be imagined. He had hitherto no inkling of the presence of the New England interlopers, and although his captain and fellow-servant was not equally ignorant, Gillam had kept his counsel well. The Governor decided at once to head a party of relief, in which he was seconded by the elder Gillam, who was at the moment only just recovering from illness caused by exposure during the shipwreck. The *Susan* was their first point of attack. Under the cover of night they made a determined effort to recapture her for the Company. It is possible that the attempt might have succeeded had not

Radisson, suspecting the move, despatched his entire available force at the same time and completely overpowered the Governor's men. He thought at first sight that Bridgar himself was among his prisoners, but the Governor was not to be caught in that fashion ; he had not himself boarded the ship. The Scotchman who accompanied him, however, was not so fortunate ; he fell into Radisson's hands and suffered for his zeal. He was tied to a post and informed that his execution would take place without ceremony on the morrow. The sentence was never carried out. For Radisson, after exposing his prisoner to the cold all night in an uncomfortable position, seems to have thought better of his threat, and after numerous vicissitudes the Scot at length regained his liberty.

Reinforcements for the French now arrived from Groseilliers. Believing himself now strong enough to beard the lion in his lair, Radisson decided to lose no more time in rounding off his schemes. First, however, he saw fit to address a letter to the Governor asking him if he "approved the action of the Company's people whom he held prisoners, who had broken two doors and the storeroom of his ship, in order to carry off the powder."

Bridgar's reply was that he owed no explanation to a renegade employee of the Company. Radisson had not been sincere in his professions, and he had dealt basely and deceitfully with him in preserving silence on the subject of the interlopers. "As I had proper instructions," concluded Bridgar, in a more conciliatory strain, "on setting sail from London to seize all ships coming to this quarter, I would willingly have joined hands with you in capturing this vessel. If you wish me to regard you as sincere you will not keep this prize for your own use."

The other's response was rapid and masterly. He marched upon Fort Nelson with twelve men, and by the following nightfall was master of the English establishment. This feat nearly drove the unhappy Governor to despair, and he sought solace by applying himself to the rum cask with greater assiduity than ever. In the frame of mind thus superin-

duced, John Bridgar, the first Governor of Port Nelson, was carried off a prisoner to Fort Bourbon.

This post was built of logs, as the others had been, but there was a bastion of stone at one end facing the river. It occupied, as nearly as one may now ascertain, the site upon which was afterwards reared York Factory. But in the course of the seventy years following the post was shifted slightly from site to site, when the exigencies of fire and other causes of destruction demanded a new building.

A few days after the Governor's arrival at Fort Bourbon, the first Indians began to appear with provisions, which were now beginning to be very sorely required. To the chief of this band Radisson related the story, properly garnished, of his exploits, realizing well how such things appeal to the savage heart. While the Indians were pondering upon his valour, great was their surprise to behold about the fort, a number of English, whom Radisson had made prisoners; and upon learning that there were others at York Factory and Hays' Island, they very handsomely offered 200 beavers for permission to go thither and massacre them. This offer Radisson wisely declined; but it seems clear that he did his best to stir up enmity amongst his Indian friends against the English. In this he was not entirely successful. Good news travels fast, too; and the Indians had got wind of Bridgar's boast that rather than see the trade pass into the hands of the French it was his intention to offer six axes for a beaver and as much merchandise in proportion. They had, besides, reason to believe in the superior generosity of the English traders as compared with the French.

It was now April, 1683. On the 22nd a disaster little foreseen by Radisson or Groseilliers occurred, which involved the destruction of their own frail ships. The *St. Pierre* and the *St. Anne* had been hauled into a small stream as far as possible in the woods and there sheltered by a knoll. At ten o'clock on the night named all at Fort Bourbon were awakened by a frightful noise, caused by the breaking up of the ice. The occupants of the fort rushed outside to find the waters everywhere rising with almost

incredible rapidity; and the masses of ice blocking up the mouth of the creek caused a complete general submersion. La Chesnaye's two vessels offered no strong resistance to the flood, and presently began to crack and splinter in all parts. In a few hours all that remained sound were the bottoms, clinging fast to the ice and mud.

Destruction of La Chesnaye's vessels.

A similar fate was apprehended for the New England ship, and Radisson made all haste thither. She was saved only by his adopting the suggestion of Bridgar, that the ice be carefully cut all about the *Susan*, as he had heard of Governor Bailey doing on a previous occasion. The ice once cut, the vessel was only pushed by the strength of the floes to one side, where she remained aground with little damage.

The chief concern of the leaders of the French now was to get the English safely out of the country as soon as possible, before the arrival of the Company's ships. To this end Radisson and Groseilliers offered them the hull of the *St. Anne* which, they believed, could with industry be patched up with new timber sufficiently well to withstand a voyage. When the English saw that these were the best terms they could expect, and that if they were left at the mercy of the Indians a much worse fate might be in store for them, they set to work with a will. The labour proved arduous, and they had suffered terribly. Four had died from cold and hunger, and two had been poisoned from having rashly drunk of a liquor they had found in the medicine-room chest, without knowing its nature; another had had his arm broken quite recently by a musket shot while out hunting. The Governor felt that his sole hope lay in the expected ships of the Company. He seems to have always adopted a high tone in dealing with the French, even to the last. He declared to Radisson that it was only one of three things that could oblige him to abandon the place, "the order of his masters, force, or famine." Groseilliers now counselled burning the island fort, in order to do away with the necessity of keeping perpetual guard there, and of always taking precautions to protect themselves against the Governor's intrigues.

This advice was acted upon forthwith; the fort was burned and a small lodge erected to accommodate such of the New Englanders as had not been carried to Fort Bourbon, or were not at work on the hull of the wrecked ship.

Early in May the Indians began to appear in great numbers. Bridgar—who, divested of his command and robbed of his stores, was now allowed at large—heard of their arrival with joy. He seems to have believed that their chiefs would not repudiate their treaties with the Company. He hoped in any case to be granted the privilege of a conference with them, but in this he was quickly undeceived.

Arrival of the Indians.

Radisson went forward to meet the Indians, who had come well loaded with peltries and who were much perturbed at discovering the helpless state of the Governor and the ascendancy of the French. But they showed no disinclination to trade with the latter, in spite of their solemn covenant, provided Groseilliers and his brother-in-law would do so on the same terms as the English. Both the bushrangers, however, seem to have been determined to put an immediate stop to what they termed folly. Let the Company give six axes for a beaver if it chose; for themselves they would countenance no such wantonness; two would suffice.

The tribe being assembled and having spread out their customary gifts, consisting of beaver tails, smoked moose tongues and pemmican, one of the leading braves arose and said:—

"Men who pretend to give us life, do you wish us to die? You know what beaver is worth and the trouble we have to take it. You call yourselves our brothers and yet will not give us what those give who make no such profession. Accept our gifts, and let us barter, or we will visit you no more. We have but to travel a hundred leagues and we will encounter the English, whose offers we have heard."

On the conclusion of this harangue, silence reigned for some moments. All eyes were turned on the two white traders. Feeling that now or never was the time to exhibit

firmness, Radisson, without rising to his feet, addressed the whole assemblage in haughty accents.

"Whom dost thou wish I should answer? I have heard a dog bark; when a man shall speak he will see I know how to defend my conduct and my terms. We love our brothers and we deserve their love in return. For have we not saved them all from the treachery of the English?"

Uttering these words fearlessly, he leapt to his feet and drew a long hunting knife from his belt. Seizing by the scalp-lock the chief of the tribe, who had already adopted him as his son, he asked, "Who art thou?" To which the chief responded, as was customary, "Thy father."

Radisson overawes the Indians.

"Then," cried Radisson, "if that is so, and thou art my father, speak for me. Thou art the master of my goods; but as for that dog who has spoken, what is he doing in this company? Let him go to his brothers, the English, at the head of the Bay. Or he need not travel so far: he may, if he chooses, see them starving and helpless on yonder island: answering to my words of command.

"I know how to speak to my Indian father," continued Radisson, "of the perils of the woods, of the abandonment of his squaws and children, of the risks of hunger and the peril of death by foes. All these you avoid by trading with us here. But although I am mightily angry I will take pity on this wretch and let him still live. Go," addressing the brave with his weapon outstretched, "take this as my gift to you, and depart. When you meet your brothers, the English, tell them my name, and add that we are soon coming to treat them and their factory yonder as we have treated this one."

The speaker knew enough of the Indian character, especially in affairs of trade, to be aware that a point once yielded them is never recovered. And it is but just to say that the terms he then made of three axes for a beaver were thereafter adopted, and that his firmness saved the Company many a cargo of these implements. His harangue produced an immediate impression upon all save the humiliated brave,

who declared that if the Assiniboines came hither to barter he would lay in ambush and kill them.

The French trader's reply to this was to the Indian mind a terrible one.

"I will myself travel into thy country," said he, "and eat sagamite in thy grandmother's skull."

While the brave and his small circle of friends were livid with fear and anger, Radisson ordered three fathoms of tobacco to be distributed; observing, contemptuously, to the hostile minority that as for them they might go and smoke women's tobacco in the country of the lynxes. The barter began, and when at nightfall the Indians departed not a skin was left amongst them.

It was now time to think of departure. As absent men tell no tales, it was decided to despatch Bridgar and his companions first. But at the last moment some trouble seems to have arisen as to which vessel the English should have to convey them to more hospitable shores. Bridgar himself would have preferred to go in the ship, and at first his passage had been arranged for in that craft; but it was at length settled that he should be carried with the brothers-in-law in their barque.

Departure of the English.

After numerous vicissitudes, which would need a volume to describe, the *St. Anne* arrived at the mouth of the St. Lawrence.

At Tadoussac was a trading post belonging to the French: and the sight of it seems to have inspired either one or both of these conscienceless adventurers with the idea of lightening their load of furs, which consisted of above two thousand skins, though this cargo only represented about one-third of the number they had actually secured by cheating, robbery and intrigue in the country of the Bay.

Having in this nefarious manner disposed of about half of La Chesnaye's property jointly with themselves, they again set sail and arrived at Quebec on the 26th of October.

Immediately on their arrival they went to report themselves to M. de la Barre, the Governor, La Chesnaye being fortunately, or unfortunately, absent in Montreal. The Governor thought proper to return the *Susan* to the New England

merchants, with a warning not to send again to the place from which she had just come, and the Company's ill-starred Governor, Bridgar, together with young Gillam, sailed on board her for New England.

"We parted," says Radisson with that matchless audacity of statement for which his narrative deserves to be famous, "on friendly terms; and he (Bridgar) could testify that I let him know at the time my attachment; and yet, that I wished still to act as heartily in the service of the King and the nation as I wished to do for France."

This hardly tallies with Bridgar's evidence before the Company, that Radisson was "a cheat, a swindler, and a black-hearted, infamous scoundrel," and that he was "a born intriguing traitor." As for the elder Gillam, he was heard to declare, when he had at length arrived on the frail and half-rotten craft which bore him and his unhappy comrades to New England, that he would not die happy until his "hangar had dipped into the blood of the French miscreant, Radisson."

Quebec soon got too hot for both of the brothers-in-law. Between the unfortunate La Chesnaye, who saw himself some thousand crowns out of pocket, and the Governor, who had received orders from France to despatch to the Court the two adventurers who seemed bent on making trouble between the two crowns, Radisson and Groseilliers decided to leave Quebec, which they did in about a fortnight after their arrival.

Radisson and Groseilliers leave Quebec.

The exact date of their departure was the 11th of November, 1683, and it was effected on board a French frigate which had brought troops to the colony. But though the captain of the frigate made all haste, the frail and shattered *St. Anne*, with Captain Gillam on board, arrived in Europe before them; and soon England was ringing with his story of the dastardly encroachment of the French into the realms of the Company at Port Nelson.*

* The material for the two last chapters has been derived chiefly from a pamphlet entitled "French Villainy in Hudson's Bay"; Radisson's own narrative, and the "Journal" of Gillam, the elder, supplied to Dongan. Radisson's narrative, divided into two parts, is written in a clear, legible character, and evinces that its author was a person of some education. The first part is in English, and was long the property of Samuel Pepys. Some years after Pepys' death, the manuscript was purchased for a trifle by Rawlinson, the bibliophile. The second part, recounting the voyages to Hudson's Bay in 1682-84, is half in French and half in English; it is now in the Bodleian library.

CHAPTER X.

1684–1687.

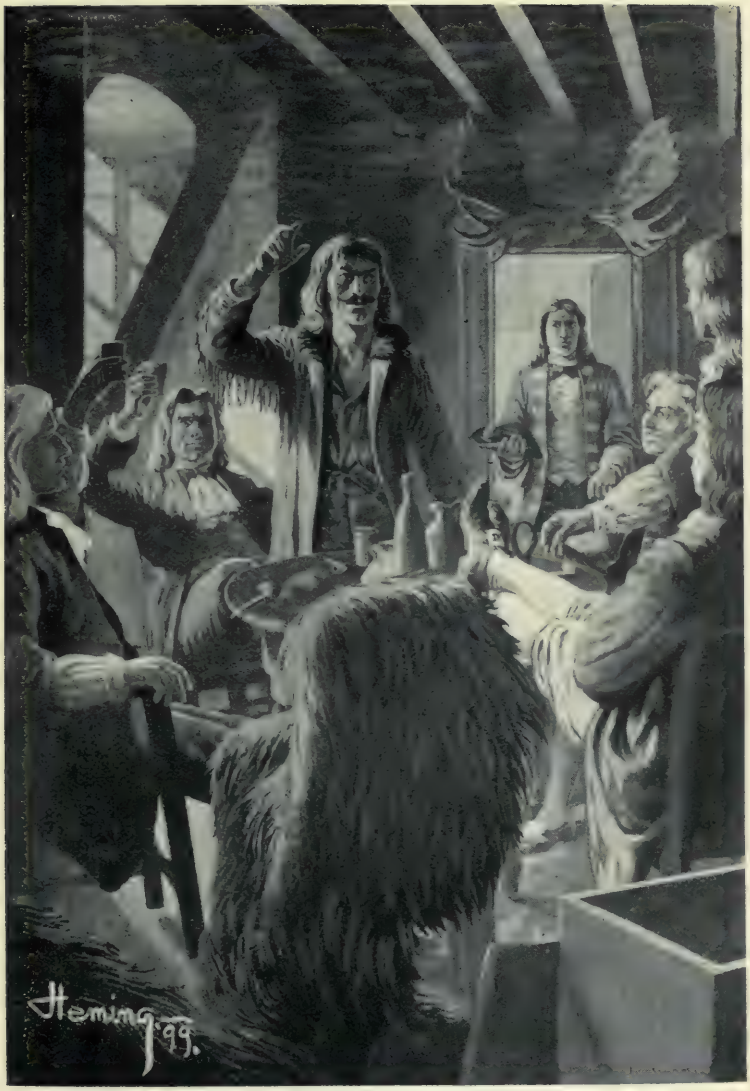
Hays writes to Lord Preston—Godey sent to Radisson's lodgings—La Barre's strenuous efforts—Radisson returns to the English—He leaves for the Bay—Meets his nephew Chouart—Fort Bourbon surrendered to the Company—Radisson's dramatic return to London.

Lord Preston, who, in the year 1684, held the post of Ambassador Extraordinary of King Charles II. at the Court of Versailles, was advised of the return to Paris of the bush-ranger Radisson in these terms :—

" My Lord : It has just reached our ears and that of his Royal Highness the Duke of York, Governor of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company, that the person who has caused all the recent trouble in the Hudson's Bay regions whereby our merchants have suffered so much at the hands of the French, is at this moment in Paris. As it is much in the interests of the nation as of the Company that there should be no repetition of these encroachments and disturbances, it might be advantageous for your Lordship to see this Mr. Radisson who, it is believed, could be brought over again to our service if he were so entreated by your Lordship. His Royal Highness, together with the other Honourable partners, are convinced from his previous conduct that it matters little to Mr. Radisson under whose standard he serves ; and that, besides, he is secretly well disposed toward us, and this in spite of his late treacherous exploits which have given great offence to the nation and damage to the Company."

Lord Preston informed of the return of Radisson and Groseilliers.

This private note was signed by Sir John Hays and Mr. Young on behalf of the Company. On its receipt by Lord Preston, he at once sent his attaché, Captain Godey, to seek out Radisson and make overtures to him. On the third floor of a house in the Faubourg St. Antoine, surrounded by a



CAPTAIN GODEY'S VISIT TO RADISSON.

(See page 112.)

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number of his relations and boon companions, the dual traitor was discovered, deeply engaged in drinking healths and in retailing his adventures to the applause of an appreciative circle. Upon the walls and mantelpiece of the apartment, and such meagre furniture as it boasted, were disposed numerous relics and trophies, bespeaking a thirty years' career in the Transatlantic wilderness.

"Radisson himself," remarks Godey, "was apparelled more like a savage than a Christian. His black hair, just touched with grey, hung in a wild profusion about his bare neck and shoulders. He showed a swart complexion, seamed and pitted by frost and exposure in a rigorous climate. A huge scar, wrought by the tomahawk of a drunken Indian, disfigured his left cheek. His whole costume was surmounted by a wide collar of marten's skin; his feet were adorned by buckskin moccasins. In his leather belt was sheathed a long knife." Such was the picture presented by this uncouth, adventurous Huguenot, not merely in the seclusion of his own lodgings, but to the polished and civilized folk of Paris of the seventeenth century. What were the projects harboured in this indomitable man's mind? In spite of his persistent intrigues it is to be doubted if he, any more than Médard Chouart des Groseilliers, was animated by more than a desire to pursue an exciting and adventurous career. Habitually holding out for the best terms, he does not appear to have saved money when it was acquired, but spent it freely. When he died he was in receipt of a pension from the Company, so far insufficient to provide for his manner of living that they were forced to pay his remaining debts.

Radisson's appearance in Paris.

Unabashed by the surroundings thus presented to him, Captain Godey announced himself, shook hands with the utmost cordiality with Radisson, and pleaded to be allowed to join in the convivial proceedings then in progress. The better to evince his sincerity, without further ceremony he accepted and drank as full a bumper of bad brandy and applauded with as much heartiness as any man of the party the truly astonishing tales of their host.

Godey was the last of the guests to depart.

"Look you," said he, when he and Radisson were alone together, "you, monsieur, are a brave man, and it does not become the brave to harbour vengeance. Nor does it become a brave nation to think hardly of any man because of his bravery, even though that nation itself be a sufferer. You know," he pursued, "what is said about you in England?"

Radisson interrupted his guest by protesting with warmth that he neither knew nor cared anything about such a matter.

"It is said, then," answered Godey, "that you have been a traitor to the king, and that there is no authority or defence for your conduct. You and Groseilliers, whilst professing friendship for the English Company have done them great injury, and endangered the peace between the two crowns."

"I am sorry," rejoined Radisson, "but all that I and my brother-in-law have done, is to be laid at the door of the Hudson's Bay Company. We wished honestly to serve them, but they cast us away as being no longer useful, when now they see what it is they have done, and how foolishly they have acted in listening to the counsels of Governor Bridgar. We really bear them no ill-will, neither the Company nor his Royal Highness." *

The gallant emissary reported the tenor of this conversation forthwith to his master, and both were agreed as to the sort of man they had to deal with. Godey expressed himself convinced that there would be little difficulty in inducing Radisson to return to the Company's service. On this advice Preston at once wrote off to Mr. Young, telling him not to further press the Company's memorial to the King, nor to seek to have the French Court take cognizance of, and award recompense for, the wrongs done the English interests. "Radisson has done this thing out of his own head, and he

Godey's report.

* As an example of the absurd legends current some years later, and perpetuated, I am sorry to say, to a later day, it would be hard to match this, from La Potherie:

"He (Preston) promised to Godey, one of his domestics, to create him perpetual secretary of the Embassy, providing he engaged Radisson in his party. Godey, the better to succeed, promised Radisson his daughter in marriage, whom he (Radisson) espoused." (La Potherie, Vol. I, p. 145.) Godey was *aide-de-camp* to Preston; he may have had a daughter, but Radisson certainly did not espouse her, inasmuch as he was already married to Sir John Kirke's daughter, who was still living.

is the one man competent to undo it. He is, I learn, well-disposed to the English, and there is no reason, if proper overtures be made him, why he should not do more for the English interests in that region than he has yet done."

At the same time La Barre, the French Governor, was urged to make the most strenuous efforts to retain the advantages for the French by the two adventurers. A royal despatch of August 5th, 1683, and signed by Lewis himself, had already been sent, in these words :—

"I recommend you to prevent the English as much as possible from establishing themselves in Hudson's Bay, possession whereof was taken in my name several years ago ; and as Colonel d'Unguent,* appointed Governor of New York by the King of England, has had precise orders on the part of the said King to maintain good correspondence with us and carefully to avoid whatever may interrupt it, I doubt not the difficulties you have experienced will cease for the future."

Lewis was by no means desirous of rendering the position of his fellow monarch over the Channel uncomfortable. He was disposed to yield in a small matter when he had his own way in most of the large ones. Had Charles yielded to French representations about Port Nelson he would have given great offence to his brother the Duke of York. Indeed, there is little doubt that had the Company not boasted members of such distinction, or the patronage of royalty, the French would have at this juncture forced their demands and overwhelmed the English possession. Radisson appears to have got wind of the situation and this was, perhaps, to him a greater argument for returning to the service of the power likely to be most permanent in Hudson's Bay. He, however, hung about idle in Paris for some weeks, in a state of indecision. Had M. de Seignely exerted his full powers of persuasion, he might have induced our bushranger to remain in the service of Lewis. But no such inducement was offered. There is some reason to believe that M. de Seignely undervalued Radisson ; but in any case the apathy of the Court influenced his actions.

* This is M. de la Barre's quaint fashion of spelling Dongan.

The bushranger was, on the other hand, exhorted to return to his first engagement with the English, Lord Preston assuring him that if he could in reality execute what he proposed, he would receive in England from his Majesty, from his Royal Highness, from the Company, and from the nation, "every sort of good treatment and entire satisfaction." The Duke's especial protection was also guaranteed. Radisson, none too punctilious, at length made up his mind as to the course he would pursue.

"I yielded," says he, "to these solicitations and determined to go to England forever, and so strongly bind myself to his Majesty's service, and to that of those interested in the nation, that no other cause could ever detach me from it."

But in order that he might have an excuse for his conduct, the very day that he arrived at this decision he is found writing to the French Minister demanding a certain grant in the north-west of Canada as an alternative to a former proposal that "in consideration of his discoveries, voyages and services he should be given every fourth beaver, trapped or otherwise caught in those territories." M. de Seignely had no suspicion of the depth of Radisson's duplicity. The minister thought him "a vain man, much given to boasting, who could do much harm, and had therefore best have his vanity tickled at home."

Radisson decides to join the English.

Up to the very eve of his departure, April 24, 1684, he was a daily attendant on the minister or his subordinates of the Department of Marine and Commerce. He was not always favoured with an audience; but when listened to spoke vaguely of fitting out and equipping vessels for trade on voyages similar to those he had already undertaken. His *naiveté*, to use no harsher term, is remarkable.

"In order," says he, "that they should not suspect anything by my sudden absence, I told them I was obliged to take a short trip into the country on friendly family matters. *I myself made good use of this time to go to London.*"

He arrived in the English capital on the 10th of May, and immediately paid his respects to Mr. Young. The project for

regaining possession of York Factory was canvassed. Radisson estimated that there would be between fifteen and twenty thousands beaver skins in the hands of his nephew, awaiting shipment. The partners appeared more than satisfied, and Radisson met with a most cordial reception. He was assured that the Company had entire confidence in him, and that their greatest regret was that there had been any misunderstanding between them. They would, it was declared on their behalf, make all amends in their power.

For a few weeks the Hudson's Bay bushranger found himself a lion. He was presented to the King in the course of a *levee*. Charles listened with the greatest assumption of interest to the adventurer's account of himself, and to his asseverations of loyalty and good will. Radisson in the evening was taken to the play-house in the suite of his Royal Highness, and there by his bizarre attire attracted almost as much attention amongst the audience as the play itself.

"To the Duke's Play-house," writes John Selwyn to his wife, "where Radisson, the American fur-hunter, was in the Royal box. Never was such a combination of French, English and Indian savage as Sir John Kirke's son-in-law. He was not wont to dress so when he was last here, but he has got him a new coat with much lace upon it, which he wears with his leather breeches and shoes. His hair is a perfect tangle. It is said he has made an excellent fortune for himself."

After a number of conferences with the partners, Radisson finally departed from Gravesend on May 17. Three ships set sail, that in which Radisson was embarked being named the *Happy Return*. The elements being favourable, the little fleet reached the Straits more speedily than usual.

Radisson's departure for Hudson's Bay.

The chief figure of this expedition, who had never borne a part in any joint enterprise without being animated by jealousy and distrust, found here ample scope for the exercise of his characteristic vices. During nearly the entire period of the voyage he evinced a perpetual and painful apprehension that one of the other ships carrying officials and servants of the Company would, with malicious intentions, arrive before him.

His first concern on awaking in the morning was to be assured that the companion vessels were in sight, and although the *Happy Return* was the most sluggish sailor of the trio, yet to such good purpose were plied the bushranger's energies and promises that her commander's seamanship made her a capital match for the others.

But just before their destination was reached contrary winds, currents and masses of floating ice brought about a separation, and Radisson began to be assailed more than ever by the fear that the English servants would arrive on the ground, overwhelm his nephew and the other French without his assistance, and thus frustrate all his plans for claiming sole credit. And in truth this fear was very nearly justified. Twenty leagues from Port Nelson the ship got blocked amidst the masses of ice, and progress, except at a raft's pace, became out of the question. In this dilemma, Radisson demanded of the captain a small boat and seven men. His request being granted, it was launched, and after undergoing forty-eight hours' fatigue, without rest or sleep, the entrance to Nelson River was reached. Imagine Radisson's surprise, as well as that of his companions, on beholding two ships at anchor, upon one of which, a complete stranger to them, floated the Royal Standard of England.

It was the English frigate which had entered at Port Nelson. The other ship was the *Alert*, commanded by Captain Outlaw, having brought out the Company's new Governor, William Phipps, the previous season. Radisson boldly headed his boat for this vessel, and when he drew near, perceived Bridgar's successor, with all his people in arms, on the quarter-deck. The Governor, in a loud voice, instantly demanded to know who Radisson was. Upon his making himself and his allegiance known, they decided to permit him to board the Company's ship. The bushranger first made it his care to be informed how the land lay, and he was inwardly rejoiced to learn that the Governor and his men had not dared to land, out of fear for the French and Indians, who were considered hostile to the English interests. This was precisely the situation Radisson most desired; a thought

seems to have struck him that after all, his nephew, Chouart, might prove intractable, and by no means so easily won over as he had anticipated. It therefore behooved him to act with adroitness and circumspection. Taking with him two men, Radisson proceeded up country in the direction of the abandoned York Factory, hourly hoping that they might discover something, or at least they should make someone hear, or see a friendly Indian, by firing musket shots or making a smoke. The attempt was not fruitless, as he tells us, for after a while they perceived ten canoes with Indians coming down the river. "At first," he says, "I thought some Frenchmen might be with them, whom my nephew might have sent to discover who the new arrivals were." Upon this supposition Radisson severed himself from his comrades, and going to meet the savages he made the usual signs to them from the bank, which the Indians at first seemed to respond to in no amiable spirit. Albeit, on addressing them in their own tongue, he was immediately recognized, the Indians testifying by shouts and playful postures to their joy at his arrival. He quickly learned from them that his nephew and the other Frenchmen were above the rapids, four leagues from the place where they then were. They had expected Groseilliers would accompany Radisson, and when they expressed surprise that this was not the case, Radisson did not scruple to tell them that Groseilliers awaited him at a short distance.

The presence of the French made known.

"But what," asked Radisson, "are you doing here? What brings you into this part of the country and in such numbers?"

The savage leader's sudden confusion betrayed him to Radisson. The circumstance of the Indians voluntarily seeking trade with the English greatly simplified the situation.

"Look you," said he, heartily, at the same time calling to Captain Geyer, who was in ambush hard by, "I am glad to find you seeking trade with the English. I have made peace with the English for the love of our Indian brothers; you, they and I are to be henceforth only one. Embrace us, therefore, in token of peace; this (pointing to Geyer) is your new brother. Go immediately to your son at the fort yonder and

carry him these tidings and the proofs of peace. Tell him to come and see me at this place, while the others will wait for me at the mouth of the river."

It should be mentioned that the chief of this band had previously announced himself as young Chouart's sire, according to the Indian custom. He now readily departed on his mission.

Radisson passed an anxious night. The sun had been risen some hours before his eyes were gladdened by the sight of a canoe, in which he descried Chouart. The young man's countenance bore, as well it might, an expression of profound amazement; and at first hardly the bare civilities of relationship passed between the pair. Chouart waited patiently for his uncle to render an explanation of the news which had reached him. Silently and slowly they walked together, and after a time the prince of liars, traitors, adventurers and bushrangers began his account of his position.

Radisson states that his nephew immediately acquiesced in his scheme. A memoir penned in 1702, the year of Radisson's death, by M. Barthier, of Quebec, asserts that the young man received with the utmost disgust, and flatly declined to entertain, his relative's proposals. He expressed, on the other hand, the greatest grief on hearing the news; for he had begun to believe that it was through their efforts that the dominion of the king had been extended in that region. Now it appeared that this labour had all been in vain. It was only his love for his mother, Radisson's sister, which prevented an open rebellion on the part of Chouart against the proposed treachery.

No rupture took place; the stronger and more crafty spirit prevailed. Chouart surrendered on the following day his command of the fort. He had, he complained, expected a far different fate for the place and his men. The tattered old *fleur de lis* standard brought by the *St. Anne's* captain from Quebec was lowered and the English emblem, with the device of the Company, run up in its stead. All the forces were assembled

Chouart surrenders to Radisson.

and amidst cheers for King Charles and the Honourable Adventurers, the Company's Governor took formal possession.

But the French bushrangers and sailors watched these proceedings with melancholy dissatisfaction, not, perhaps, as much from patriotic motives as from the frailty of their own tenure. They could no longer be assured of a livelihood amongst so many English, who bore themselves with so haughty a mien.

Radisson proceeded to make an inventory of all the skins on hand, together with all those concealed in *caches* in the woods. The results showed 239 packages of beaver, or about 12,000 skins, together with merchandise sufficient to barter for seven or eight thousand more. Instructions were now given by Radisson, the Governor remaining passive, to have all these goods taken in canoes to the ships.

It now only remained for the bushranger to accomplish one other object before setting sail with the cargo for England. Radisson speaks of himself as having a secret commission, but no authority can be found for his statement. It involved the retention in the Company's service of his nephew and the other Frenchmen; but even assuming that Radisson were armed with any such instructions, the plan was not likely to enjoy the approval of Governor Phipps, who, if he were at the outset of his term of office determined upon any one thing, it was that Fort Nelson should be cleared of Frenchmen. Exactly how this was to be arranged was not quite clear, especially as there was yet no open rupture between the two authorities. But for such a rupture they had not long to wait. They were destined on the very eve of his departure to be involved in a quarrel.

Some years before an Assiniboine chief named Ka-chou-touay had taken Radisson to his bosom and adopted him as his son with all the customary ceremonies. This formidable chief, who had been at war with a neighbouring tribe at the time of his adopted son's arrival in the country, now put in an appearance. Instead of the joy Radisson expected it was with reproaches that he was greeted. Ka-chou-touay informed him that a brother chief of his, named La Barbé, with one of

his sons, had been killed while expostulating with a party of English. The consequences of this rash action might be so grave that Radisson felt it to be his duty to resort to the Governor and demand that his servants should be punished for the crime, or else he would not be answerable for the consequences. The Governor does not appear to have taken Radisson's demand in good part, declining altogether to intervene in the matter. The other now proceeded to commands and threats. He asserted that as long as he remained in the country the Governor was his subordinate, which greatly angered that official and high words passed.

Dispute between Radisson and the Governor.

The task the Governor had set himself was by no means easy, especially if he wished to avoid bloodshed. But the plan of overpowering and disarming the French was finally accomplished through strategy. All were escorted aboard the ship, even to Chouart himself, and on the fourth of September sail was set.

On this voyage Radisson's state of mind rivalled that which he had experienced when outward bound. His late anxiety to be the first upon the scene at Port Nelson was paralleled now by his desire to be the first in London. If happily, the Company should first hear an account of what had transpired from himself, he felt convinced full measure of justice would be done him. If, on the other hand, Governor Phipps' relation were first received there was no knowing how much prejudice might be raised against him.

Great as was his impatience, he managed to hide it with adroitness, so that none save his nephew suspected the intention he shortly executed. The captain, crew and Company's servants left the ship leisurely at Portsmouth. Those going up to London lingered for the coach, but not so with Radisson, who instantly made his way to the post-house, where he hired a second-rate steed, mounted it and, without the courtesy of an adieu to his late comrades, broke into a gallop, hardly restrained until London bridge was reached.

His arrival took place close upon midnight, but late as was the hour, he took no thought of securing lodging or of

apprising his wife of his advent. He spurred on his stumbling horse to the dwelling of Mr. Young, in Wood Street, Cheapside. The honourable adventurer had retired for the night, but, nevertheless, in gown and night-cap welcomed Radisson with great cordiality. He listened, we are told, with the greatest interest and satisfaction to the bushranger's tale, garnished with details of his own marvellous prowess and zeal for the Company. Nor, perhaps, was Radisson less satisfied when, on attaining his own lodging, he pondered on the day's exploits. He slumbered little, and at eleven o'clock Young was announced, and was ushered in, declaring that he had already been to Whitehall and apprised the Court of the good news. His Majesty and his Royal Highness had expressed a wish to see Radisson, the hero of these great doings, and Young was accordingly brought to escort the bushranger into the Royal presence. It was a triumph, but a short-lived one. Radisson had hardly left the precincts of the Court, his ears still ringing with the praises of King and courtiers, than the Deputy-Governor, Mr. Dering, received Phipps' account of the affair, which was almost as unfair to Radisson and the part he had played in the re-capture of Port Nelson, as Radisson's own account was flattering.

Phipps' letter to the Company.

On the receipt of the report, a General Court of the Adventurers was held on September 26th. By the majority of members the bushranger was hardly likely to be accorded full justice, for great offence had been given by his presentation at Court and the extremely informal manner of his arrival. Despite the friendliness of Hays, Young and several other partners, Radisson was not again granted a position of authority in the Company's service.

In the meanwhile young Chouart, being detained in England against his wish, decided to write to Denonville and propose to accompany his uncle to Port Nelson and make his escape and gain Quebec by land. The Governor forwarded this letter to Paris and demanded permission to promise fifty pistoles to those who would seize the traitor Radisson and bring him to Quebec. The minister complied. But in

March, 1687, he had had no success. "The misfortune," says the minister, "that the man Radisson has done to the colony, and that he is still capable of doing if he remains longer amongst the English, should oblige Denonville and Champagne to make every effort to seize him and so judgment will be held out." Radisson did, it is true, make another voyage to Hudson's Bay, but his sojourn was of brief duration, and a plot set on foot to seize him failed.

Not long afterwards, "Peter Raddison" is found to be in receipt of a pension of ten pounds a month from the Company, which he continued to enjoy for many years to the time of his death at Islington, in 1702.



CHAPTER XI.

1683–1686.

Feigned Anger of Lewis—He writes to La Barre—Importance Attached to Indian Treaties — Duluth's zeal — Gauthier de Comportier — Denonville made Governor—Capture of the *Merchant of Perpetuana* —Expedition of Troyes against the Company's Posts in the Bay—Moose Fort Surrendered.

When the news of the expedition of 1684 reached the Court of Versailles, Lewis professed anger that the peace between the two crowns should be broken even in that remote corner of the world. He related the discussion which had taken place between the English ambassador and himself with regard to Radisson's treachery. He had been happy, he said, to inform King Charles's representative that he was unwilling to afford his "brother of England" any cause of complaint. Nevertheless, as he thought it important to prevent the English from establishing themselves in that river, it would be well to make a proposal to the commandant at Hudson's Bay that neither French nor English should have power to make any new establishments.

Long before that he had written to Governor La Barre, in no measured terms, demanding of him what he meant by releasing the Boston vessel, the *Susan*, without calling on the intendant, or consulting the sovereign council.

"You have herein done," said he, "just what the English would be able to make a handle of, since in virtue of your ordinance you caused a vessel to be surrendered which ought strictly to be considered a pirate, as it had no commission; and the English will not fail to say that you so fully recognized the regularity of the ship's papers as to surrender it."

Simultaneously with the receipt of this letter from his monarch, there came to the perplexed Governor a letter from the Sieur Duluth, stating that at great expense of presents he had prevented the western tribes from further carrying their beaver trade to the English. He had, it appeared, met the Sieur de la Croix

Duluth in the West.

with his two comrades, who had presented the despatches in which the Governor had urged him to use every endeavour in forwarding letters to Chouart, at Nelson River.

"To carry out your instructions," wrote Duluth, "there was only Monsieur Péré, who would have to go himself, the savages having all at that time withdrawn into the interior." He added that Péré had left during the previous month, and doubtless at that time had accomplished his mission. Duluth invariably expressed himself with great confidence on the subject of the implicit trust which the savages reposed in him. More than once in his letters, as well as in verbal messages forwarded to his superiors, he boasted that before a couple of years were out not a single savage would visit the English at Hudson's Bay. To this end they had bound themselves by the numerous presents they had received at his hands; and he was assured that they would not go back on their word.

As with Duluth so with the other officials, pioneers and emissaries amongst the French, great importance was attached to treaties and compacts with the aborigines. Every endeavour was made to obtain the good-will and amity of the Indians.

Perhaps nothing exhibits so powerfully the totally differing attitude and motives of the Company, compared with the French traders, than the manner in which, in those early times, the Red man was trusted and believed by the one and distrusted and contemned by the other. One may peruse neither the narratives of the Jesuits nor of the traders without an emotion of awe at the simple faith of those pioneers in the honesty and probity of the Red men. To the very end, when disaster succeeding disaster overwhelmed the propaganda of Loyola amongst the northern tribes and exterminated its disciples, we read of the Frenchman trusting to the word and deferring to the prejudices of his Indian brother. It was as if the latter were indeed of a common steadfastness and moral nature with his own. Contrast that trait in the English character which is ex-

French and English relations with the Indians.

hibited in his early dealings with inferior and black peoples in India and Africa, to that he has retained to the present day. Never was the contrast greater than during the acute conflict of English and French interests in Hudson's Bay at this time. The early governors and traders almost without exception openly despised the Indian and secretly derided his most solemn counsels. August treaties were set aside on the most flimsy pretexts, and if the virtues of the savages were too highly esteemed by the French, they were on the other hand perhaps much too cheaply held by their rivals.

But to whatever extent they may have held themselves bound by compacts of this kind, the Company's officials were not so foolish as to doubt their potency amongst savages. Thus we find that from the years 1682 to 1688 the Company regularly instructed its servants to enact the strongest treaties with the "captains and kings of the rivers and territories where they had settlements." "These compacts," observes one of the Company's servants, "were rendered as firm and binding as the Indians themselves could make them. Ceremonies of the most solemn and sacred character accompanied them."

Duluth had already built a fort near the River à la Maune, at the bottom of Lake Nepigon, and thither he expected at least six of the northern nations to resort in the spring. Lest this should not be sufficient for the purpose he designed building another in the Christineaux River, which would offer an effectual barrier to the expansion of the English trade. With characteristic zeal Duluth, in a letter written at this time, concluded with these words:

"Finally, sir, I wish to lose my life if I do not absolutely prevent the savages from visiting the English."

But with every good will to serve his monarch and stifle in infancy the growing trade of the Hudson's Bay Company in the northern regions, Duluth vastly undervalued the forces of circumstance as well of enterprise at the command of the enemy. The plans of the French were destined to be confounded by the unforeseen and treacherous action of Radisson and Chouart in the following year.

"What am I to do?" now became the burden of La

Barre's appeals to the King. The young priest who acted as his secretary at Quebec was kept perpetually writing to Versailles for instructions. His letters are long, and filled with explanations of the situation, which only served to confuse his superiors. Fearful of offending the English on one hand and thereby precipitating New France in a war with New England, and on the other of arousing the resentment of the colonists by a supine behaviour, the unhappy Denonville was in an unpleasant dilemma.

"Am I to oppose force to force?" he asks in one letter. "Am I to venture against those who have committed these outrages against your Majesty's subjects at sea? It is a matter in which your Majesty will please to furnish me with some precise and decisive orders whereunto I shall conform my conduct and actions."

But the Most Christian King was by no means anxious to quarrel with his cousin Charles either for the dominion of, or the fur-trade monopoly in, the north. Charles was in possession of a handsome subsidy paid out of the exchequer of Lewis. Europe was spectator of the most cordial relations between these two monarchs, relations which are described by more than one candid historian as those commonly subsisting between master and vassal. That tempest of indignation which was to break over England in the reign of Charles's successor would have not so long been deferred had but a real knowledge of the "good understanding and national concord" been known to Englishmen at large.

Lewis unwilling to oppose the English.

Under the circumstances it is not surprising that Lewis concluded to do nothing. It was not that opportunities to regain what was lost were lacking. An old soldier, Gauthier de Comportier, who with a number of other patriots had learned of the jeopardy in which French interests lay in the north, presented a memoir to the King offering, if a grant were made him, to win all back from the English and to establish three posts on the Bourbon River. The grant was refused.

A change then came which altered the aspect of affairs.

In February, 1685, Charles II. died, and the Duke of York, second Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, ascended the throne of England. Lewis was not the last to perceive that the accession of James would cause but little real difference, as the latter and himself were bound together by ties as strong as had bound Charles, yet saw at the same time that full advantage might safely be reaped from the change of monarchs. Proceedings were instantly therefore set on foot to retrieve the fortunes of the French in the fur countries.

The conduct of Groseilliers and Radisson had deeply offended the inhabitants of Quebec. An excited populace burnt the pair in effigy, and a decree was issued for their arrest should they at any time be apprehended, and for their delivery to those whom they had betrayed. But it was the anger of La Chesnaye and his associates of the Company which was especially strong. An expedition which they had sent out to Port Nelson, with the intention of collecting the wealth in peltries, returned to the St. Lawrence without so much as a single beaver.

The success of the English made some decided action on the part of the French inevitable. La Barre was recalled and his successor, the Marquis de Denonville, determined to take matters into his own hands, rather than see the interests of New France in the Bay suffer. He relied upon the success of the expedition to atone for the boldness of the initiative, but his action was not taken without repeated warnings addressed to the Minister. "All the best of our furs, both as to quality and quantity, we must expect to see shortly in the hands of the English." If the English were not expelled they would secure all the fat beaver from an infinite number of tribes in the north who were being discovered every day; besides abstracting the greater portion of the peltries that ordinarily reached them at Montreal through the Ottawas, Assiniboines and other tribes.*

* Our Frenchmen have seen quite recently from Port Nelson some Indians who were known to have traded several years ago at Montreal. The posts at the head of the Bay Abbitibi and Nemisco can be reached through the woods and seas; our Frenchmen are acquainted with the road. But in regard to the posts

In the month of July, 1685, two ships belonging to the French Company, returning in disappointment to Canada from Port Nelson, met, at the mouth of the Straits, one of the Hudson's Bay Company's vessels named the *Merchant of Perpetuana*, commanded by one Edward Humes. She was bound for York Fort with a cargo of merchandise and provisions. No time was lost on the part of the French in intercepting her. Captain Humes not surrendering with sufficient alacrity to please the enemy, the *Merchant of Perpetuana* was boarded and forcibly possessed in the name of King Lewis. Several English sailors lost their lives. The vessel having been seized in this manner, her prow was headed for Quebec, where her master and crew were summarily cast into gaol.

The French capture a Company's ship.

After a miserable confinement, lasting eleven months, the sufferings of Captain Humes ended with his death, and the other prisoners, exposed to the insults and indignities of the Quebec populace, were ultimately sent away to Martinique on board their own ship, and there sold as slaves. The mate, Richard Smithsend by name, managed to escape. Upon reaching London the tale he unfolded to his employers excited general indignation. A memorial of the outrage, couched in vigorous language, was presented to the King,

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occupied by the English in the River Bourbon or Port Nelson it is impossible to hold any posts below them and convey merchandise thither except by sea. Some pretend that it is feasible to go thence overland; but the river to reach that quarter remains yet to be discovered, and when discovered could only admit the conveyance of a few men and not of any merchandise. In regard to Hudson's Bay, should the King not think proper for enforcing the reasons his Majesty has for opposing the usurpation of the English on his lands, by the just titles proving his Majesty's possession long before the English had any knowledge of the country, nothing is to be done but to find means to support the Company of the said Bay, formed in Canada, by the privilege his Majesty has been pleased this year to grant to all his subjects of New France; and to furnish them for some years with a few vessels of 120 tons, well armed and equipped. I hope with this aid our Canadians will support this business, which will otherwise perish of itself; whilst the English merchants, more powerful than our Canadians, will with good ships continue their trade, whereby they will enrich themselves at the expense of the Colony and the King's revenue.—Despatch of Denonville, 12th November, 1685.

but James, resolved not to give offence to his friend and ally the Most Christian King, took no notice of the matter.

Amongst the French in Canada there were not wanting bold spirits to follow up this daring stroke. Chief amongst them, not merely for the character of his achievements, but for his uncommon and romantic personality, was the Chevalier de Troyes. This Canadian nobleman, who was of advanced years, was a retired captain in the army. He believed he now saw an opportunity to win a lasting distinction, and to rival, and perhaps surpass, the exploits of Champlain, Lusson, Frontenac and the other hero-pioneers of New France. Scholarly in his tastes, and frail of body, though by profession a soldier, he emerged from privacy on Christmas Eve, 1685, and asked of the Governor a commission to drive the English utterly from the Northern Bay.

The authority the old soldier sought for was granted. He was empowered to "search for, seize and occupy the most advantageous posts, to seize the robbers, bushrangers and others whom we know to have taken and arrested several of our French engaged in the Indian trade, whom we order him to arrest, especially the said Radisson and his adherents wherever they may be found, and bring them to be punished as deserters, according to the rigour of the ordinances." The rigour of the ordinances was death.

Fourscore Canadians were selected to form part of the expedition against the Hudson's Bay Company's posts by the Chevalier de Troyes. For his lieutenants, the leader chose the three sons of a nobleman of New France named Charles Le Moine. One, the eldest, a young man of only twenty-five, was to bear an enduring distinction in the annals of France as one of her most able and intrepid naval commanders. This was the Sieur d'Iberville. His brothers, taking their names, as he had done, from places in their native land, were called the Sieurs de Sainte Hèlène and de Marincourt. Thirty soldiers were directly attached to the Chevalier's command, veterans who had, almost to a man, seen service in one or other of the great European wars. That they might not be without the ministrations of

religion, Father Sylvie, a Jesuit priest, accompanied the expedition.

"The rivers," writes a chronicler of the Troyes expedition, "were frozen and the earth covered with snow when that small party of vigorous men left Montreal in order to ascend the Ottawa River as far as the height of land and thence to go down to James' Bay." At the beginning of April they arrived at the Long Sault, where they prepared some canoes in order to ascend the Ottawa River. From Lake Temiscamingue they passed many portages until they reached Lake Abbitibi, at the entrance or most southern extremity of which they built a small fort of stockades. After a short halt they continued their course towards James' Bay.

Expedition of de Troyes.

The establishment first doomed to conquest by Troyes and his companions was Moose Factory, a stockade fort having four bastions covered with earth. In the centre was a house forty feet square and as many high, terminating in a platform. The fort was escaladed by the French late at night and the palisades made short work of by the hatchets of their bush-rangers.

Amongst the garrison none appears to have attempted a decent defence save the chief gunner, who perished bravely at his post of duty.* A cry for quarter went up and the English were made prisoners on the spot. They were sixteen in number, and as the attack was made at night they were in a state of almost complete undress. Troyes found in the fort twelve cannon, chiefly six and eight-pounders, three thousand pounds of powder and ten pounds of lead.

It is worthy of record that the capture was effected with an amount of pomp and ceremony calculated to strike the deepest awe into the hearts of those fifteen unhappy and not too intelligent Company's apprentices, who knew nothing of fighting nor had bargained for anything so perilous. For so small a conquest it was both preceded and followed by almost as much circumstance as would have sufficed for the Grand

* Iberville declares that he split his head into fragments.

Monarque himself in one of his theatrical sieges. The Chevalier announced in a loud voice that he took possession of the fort and island "in the name of his Most Christian Majesty the Most High, Most Mighty, Most Redoubtable Monarch Lewis XIV. of the Most Christian Name, King of France and Navarre." In obvious imitation of Lusson, a sod of earth was thrice raised in the air, whilst a cry of "Vive le Roi" rang out over those waters wherein were sepultured the bodies of Henry Hudson and his men.

Capture of Moose Factory.

NOTE.—The career of the Chevalier de Troyes ended abruptly and tragically in 1687, when he and all his men, to the number of ninety, were massacred at Niagara.

CHAPTER XII.

1686–1689.

The French Attack upon Fort Rupert—Governor Sargeant Apprised—Intrepidity of Nixon—Capture of Fort Albany—Disaster to the *Churchill*—The Company Hears the ill News—Negotiations for Colonial Neutrality—Destruction of New Severn Fort—Loss of the *Hampshire*—The Revolution.

Undecided whether to next attack Fort Rupert or Fort Albany, the Chevalier de Troyes was prompted to a decision through learning that a boat containing provisions had left Moose Factory on the previous day bound for Rupert's River, Iberville was therefore sent with nine men and two bark canoes to attack a sloop belonging to the Company then lying at anchor at the mouth of the latter river with fourteen souls aboard, including the Governor. To accomplish this stroke it was necessary to travel forty leagues along the sea coast. The road was extremely difficult and in places almost impassable. A shallop was constructed to carry a couple of small cannon, and on the 25th of June Troyes left for Fort Rupert.

St. Hèlène was sent on in advance to reconnoitre the establishment. He returned with the information that it was a square structure, flanked by four bastions, but that all was in a state of confusion owing to repairs and additions then being made to the fort. The cannon had not yet been placed, being temporarily accommodated outside on the slope of a redoubt.

Before the attack, which could only have one issue, was made by the land forces, Iberville had boarded the Company's sloop, surprised captain and crew, and made all, including Governor Bridgar, prisoners. Four of the English were killed.

After this exploit Iberville came ashore, rejoined his superior and overpowered the almost defenceless garrison of Fort Rupert.

The French forces now united, and St. Hèlène having been as successful as his brother in securing the second of the Company's ships, all embarked and sailed for the remaining post of the Company in that part of the Bay.

Neither Troyes nor Iberville knew its precise situation ; but a little reconnoitring soon discovered it. Fort Albany was built in a sheltered inlet forty yards from the borders of the Bay. Two miles to the north-east was an *estrapade* on the summit of which was placed a seat for a sentinel to sight the ships expected from England and to signal them if all was well. But on this morning, unhappily, no sentinel was there to greet with a waving flag the Company's ship, on the deck of which young Iberville stood.

Two Indians, however, brought Governor Sargeant tidings of the approach of the enemy, and his previous successes at Moose and Rupert rivers. The Governor immediately resolved upon making a bold stand; all was instantly got in readiness to sustain a siege, and the men were encouraged to behave with fortitude. Two hours later the booming of cannon was heard, and soon afterwards a couple of skirmishers were sighted at a distance. Despite the Governor's example, the servants at the fort were thrown into the greatest confusion. Two of their number were deputed by the rest to inform the Governor that they were by no means disposed to sacrifice their lives without provision being made for themselves and families in case of a serious issue. They were prevailed upon by the Governor to return to their posts, and a bounty was promised them. Bombardment by the French soon afterwards began, and lasted for two days, occasionally replied to by the English. But it was not until the evening of the second day that the first fatality occurred, when one of the servants was killed, and this brought about a mutiny. Elias Turner, the chief gunner, declared to his comrades that it was impossible for the Governor to hold the place and that, for his part, he was ready to throw himself on the clemency of the French. Sargeant overhearing this declaration, drew his pistol and threatened to blow out the gunner's brains if he did not

Attack on Fort Albany.

return to his post, and this form of persuasion proved effective. The French now profited by the darkness to bring their cannon through the wood closer to the fort; and by daybreak a series of heavy balls struck the bastions, causing a breach. Bridgar and Captain Outlaw, then at Fort Albany, were convinced that the enemy was undermining the powder magazine, in which case they would certainly be blown up.

The French from the ship had thrown up a battery, which was separated from the moat surrounding the fort by less than a musket shot. None ventured to show himself above ground at a moment of such peril. A shell exploded at the head of the stairway and wounded the cook. The cries of the French could now be distinctly heard outside the fort—"Vive le Roi, vive le Roi." In their fright and despair the English echoed the cry "Vive le Roi," thinking thereby to propitiate their aggressors. But the latter mistook the cry for one of defiance, as a token of loyalty to an altogether different monarch, and the bullets whistled faster and thicker. Sargeant desired to lower the flag floating above his own dwelling, but there was none to undertake so hazardous a task. Finally Dixon, the under-factor, offered to show himself and propitiate the French. He first thrust a white cloth from a window and waved a lighted torch before it. He then called in a loud voice, and the firing instantly ceased. The under-factor came forth, fully dressed, and bearing two huge flagons of port wine. Walking beyond the parapets he encountered both Troyes and Iberville, and by the light of a full moon the little party of French officers and the solitary Englishman sat down on the mounted cannon, or on the ground beside it, broached the two flagons and drank the health of the two kings, their masters.

"And now, gentlemen," said Dixon, "what is it you want?"

"Possession of your fort in the name of his Most Christian Majesty, King Lewis XIV."

Dixon, explaining that he was not master there, offered to conduct this message to Sargeant, and in a very short time the French commanders were seated comfortably within the house of the Governor. The demand was again preferred, it being

added that great offence had been given by the action of the English in taking captive three French traders, the previous autumn, and keeping them prisoners on ground owned and ruled by the King of France. For this reason reparation was demanded, and Sargeant was desired at once to surrender the fort. The Governor was surprised at such extreme measures, for which he was totally unprepared, but was willing to surrender upon terms of capitulation. On the following morning these were arranged.

It was agreed that Sargeant should continue to enjoy all his personal effects; and further, that his deputy, Dixon, three domestics and his servant, should accompany him out of the fort. It was also agreed that Troyes should send the clerks and servants of the Company to Charlton Island, there to await the arrival of the Company's ships from England. In case of their non-arrival within a reasonable time, Troyes promised to assist them to such vessel as he could command for the purpose. The Frenchman also gave Sargeant the provisions necessary to keep him and his companions from starvation. All quitted the fort without arms, save Sargeant and his son, whose swords and pistols hung at their sides. The Governor and his suite were provided with passage to Hays Island, where he afterwards made his escape to Port Nelson. The others were distributed between Forts Moose and Albany, and were treated with considerable severity and hardship.

Capitulation of the fort.

Having attended to the disposition of his prisoners and their property, Troyes, accompanied by Iberville, departed on 10th August for Montreal. The gallant Chevalier and his associates would have been glad to have pursued their successes, by crossing the Bay and capturing York Factory. But although two ships belonging to the Company had fallen to their lot, yet they could find none competent to command them. The distance between Albany and Port Nelson was by water two hundred and fifty leagues, and the road overland was as yet unknown to the French. But it was not their purpose that it should long remain so. In a letter to his official superior at Quebec, Denonville, pursuing his way

amongst the tribes of the Upper Mississippi region, boasted that the next year would not pass without their becoming acquainted with it.

Wherefore Troyes suffered himself to be prevailed upon by Iberville, and be content with the victories already won. They carried with them in their journey more than 50,000 beaver as a trophy of their arms. Many of the Hudson's Bay Company's servants were employed in bearing the spoils. Along the dreary march several of these unhappy captives were killed through the connivance of the French with the Indians; and the survivors reached Quebec in a dreadfully emaciated and halt condition.

Troyes' victories were ludicrously exaggerated: his return, therefore, was attended with much pomp.

Ignorant of Troyes and his conquests, the Company sent out its annual expedition as usual in 1687. In the autumn of this year the *Churchill* was caught in the ice near Charlton Island. Iberville was quickly apprised of this mishap, and sent a party of four across the ice to reconnoitre. They appear to have been somewhat careless, for, while one sank down from utter exhaustion, the others were surprised by the Company's crew, seized and bound. One of the three, however, managed to escape the fate of his companions, who were manacled and placed in the bottom of the ship's hold, where they passed the winter.

French prisoners taken by the "Churchill"

But the three Frenchmen enjoyed no monopoly of misfortune. The captain of the ship, while hunting on the island in the early days of spring, lost his life by drowning; and there were numerous minor calamities. In May, preparation was made for departure, and as the English were short-handed the two Frenchmen were forced to lend their aid. This they did willingly, glad to exchange the open air of heaven for that of the hold of the ship. One day, while most of the crew were aloft, one of the Frenchmen, perceiving only two of his captors on deck, furtively secured an axe. With this implement he silently split the skulls of both men, and then ran to release his comrade temporarily chained below.

The pair seized fire-arms which they came upon in a corner of the hold, and brandishing these in skilful fashion, they suddenly changed from captives into masters. In opprobrious terms and with violent gesticulations they dared the crew to come down from the rigging, or indeed to lay a hand upon the fringe of a shroud ; and while one watched with two drawn pistols in hand the shivering seamen in the shrouds and rigging, the other steered the ship towards Rupert's River. How long this drama might have lasted it is hard to say, for within a few hours Iberville and his ship hove in sight. He had fitted out an expedition to rescue his men as soon as the ice would permit, and now came and took charge of the *Churchill* and all on board.

The tidings of this expedition of the Chevalier Troyes, following close upon the harrowing tale of Smithsend, the mate of the *Merchant of Perpetuana*, excited the Adventurers to a pitch of fury. An extraordinary general meeting was held and London was placarded with an account of the outrages. A newsletter was issued at the Company's expense detailing the events, and carrying them into the remotest parts of the kingdom. Lord Churchill, who had succeeded King James in the governorship of the Company, personally presented a petition of the outraged Company of Adventurers to the King, wherein it was prayed "that James would be pleased to afford them his Royal assistance and Protection and that Your Majesty will demand and procure satisfaction to be made them for all losses and damages they have suffered as well formerly as by this last invasion."

News of the disaster reaches England.

It is now necessary to mention what had been happening between the two crowns between 1685 and 1688.

In the first named year, in response to the pressure brought to bear upon both by their subjects, James had agreed with Lewis to appoint a joint commission to examine into the disputes between the two nations and, if possible, effect a pacific settlement.

Their respective possessions in America were giving the

two Crowns so much trouble and expense that they were ready to welcome any arrangement which would reduce the burden. War between England and France in the old days had been a simple matter, confined to contiguous territory of whose geography and physical features they knew something. But now the mother countries could not offer each other hostilities without a score or so of their offspring colonies springing at each other's throats.

If war between France and England could only be confined to war between France and England, and not be allowed to spread itself over innumerable savage tribes and dependencies in North America, it was felt that a great end would thereby be gained.

The point sought by both kings was to make America neutral. Such a thing would have been excellent, had it but been possible. But the futility of such an arrangement was instantly made manifest. Both races in America were too eager and too anxious to reap the advantages of war. It was not likely that the Colonial English would allow a rich prize to pass them, only to be seized a hundred leagues farther east by the home authorities. The Colonial French were not to be expected in time of war to suffer tamely from competition in the fur-trade, when the very principles of their allegiance urged them to forcible retaliation.

Negotiations for Colonial neutrality.

Even without the episode of the *Merchant of Perpetuana* the rivalry between the two nations for the fur-trade was so bitter as to be a perpetual danger to peace. For this reason, and in order to mark some delimitation to the trade of the two countries, the joint commission had sat and examined into the matter.

On the sixth of November, 1686, a treaty of neutrality had been concluded between the two kings. It stipulated for a "firm peace, union and concord, and good understanding between the subjects" of James and Lewis. No vessels of either sovereign were thereafter to be employed in attacking the subjects of the other in any of the colonies. No soldiers of either king stationed in any of the colonies were to engage

in any act of hostility such as giving aid or succour to men, or provisions to savages, at war with one another. But the fourth article of this treaty was productive of much confusion and misunderstanding.

"It has been agreed," it ran, "that each of the said kings shall hold the domains, rights, pre-eminences in the seas, straits and other waters of America which, and in the same extent, of right belongs to them; and in the same manner which they enjoy at present."

Now, at the very moment this treaty was signed, the French, by the victory of Troyes, were in possession of Fort Albany and the English still held Port Nelson. As the liberty of navigation was not disturbed by the Treaty it would appear that the French retained the right to sail in the Bay.

Commissioners were appointed to consider the carrying out of the treaty, the Sieurs Barillon and Bonrepas acting on behalf of France, and Lords Sutherland, Middleton and Godolphin for James. To these commissioners the Company presented a further memorial, which dwelt upon their grievances "for five years past, in a time of peace and good correspondence between the two crowns."

These commissioners appear to have done their best to arrange matters satisfactorily; but such a result was impossible under the conditions. They were privately instructed by their respective masters to agree to hold the trade of Port Nelson in common. Such a proposal was extremely impracticable, as that well-informed subject, Denonville, made haste to inform his royal master. The proximity of the English, he declared, in such a remote part would be a certain source of hostility on both sides, and a dangerous temptation for numbers of "libertines," whom the least dissatisfaction would induce to take refuge at Port Nelson.

Impracticability of the Treaty.

The "libertines" he thus alluded to were the bushrangers, who were already giving the French great trouble and uneasiness through their wild, undisciplined habits and their freedom from restraint. Denonville added that the Hudson's Bay

Company, paying higher prices for beaver than the French could do, would always have a preference, and consequently would almost monopolize the trade. It was therefore better, in his opinion, to effect a compromise in the Bay, restoring the three forts Troyes had taken in exchange for Port Nelson, which, so he stated, was worth more than the other three together for trading purposes. Besides, on the first rupture, it would be very easy to retake them by an overland march, as Troyes had done.

But such proposals on the part of the French were indignantly rejected by the English Company. There was, therefore, nothing for it but a *modus vivendi*, under which no further encroachments in the Bay were to be made by either party.

But whatever the intent of the negotiations, there was nothing to compel the parties directly interested to observe them. The elated French Company was too much inclined to retain what Troyes had wrested from the English to adhere to sophistries and weak-kneed arguments. It engaged Iberville to return to Fort Albany, upon which establishment it had bestowed the name of St. Anne, and repulse the English should their ships arrive and endeavour to land. Captain Moon, returning from Port Nelson, did make an attempt with twenty-four men to surprise the French. He built a station some eight miles distant; but Iberville heard of it, marched thither with great despatch, and pursued them for twenty miles. He then made preparations for seizing Captain Moon's ship, embarking upwards of forty men in canoes and small boats for this purpose. But those aboard her defeated his intention in the night, by setting her on fire and making their escape to the shore, where they rejoined their companions and made the best of their way overland to New Severn, a fort which had been erected in the previous year as a means of drawing trade away from the French conquerors in the eastern parts of the Bay.

Iberville was not long ignorant of the retreat of those who had escaped him; nor of the prosperity which attended the new factory. He arrived before New Severn in October, 1689,

obtained its surrender and took the Company's Governor prisoner.

Amongst the Governor's papers which he seized was a letter from the secretary of the Company, ordering him, on behalf of the partners, to proclaim the Prince and Princess of Orange King and Queen of England, showing that the chief spirits of the Company were not unfriendly to those who precipitated the Revolution.

Glorying in this new exploit, Iberville now returned to Fort St. Anne, just in time to behold the spectacle of two strange ships standing off in the Bay.

The presence of these vessels was explained by the Company having sent out an expedition, comprising eighty-three men of both crews, with instructions to land on an island close to the Chechouan River and establish a fort, from whence they could sally forth to the re-conquest of Fort Albany. But already the winter had overtaken them, and the two vessels were locked in the ice. Their fort was, however, pretty well advanced, and they had landed a number of pieces of cannon. Iberville lay in ambush and, watching his opportunity, when twenty-one of the English were proceeding for a supply of stores to the ship, intercepted them. The whole party fell into the hands of the French; and Marincourt, with fourteen men, now began to reconnoitre the forces on the island. A brisk cannonading ensued between the two parties. After this had lasted some days Iberville found means to summon the Company's commander to surrender, threatening him with no quarter if he deferred compliance.

To this the Governor responded that he had been given to understand on his departure from London that there was a treaty in force between the two Crowns, and that it occasioned him much astonishment that the French paid so little heed to it. Iberville's response was not exactly truthful, for he declared that whether a treaty existed or not he had not been the first to invade it; and that in any case he could waste no time in parley. The Governor replied that his force was still a strong one; but that he would not be averse to surrender if Iberville

Surrender of the Company's ships to the French.

would agree to reimburse the Company's officers out of the proceeds of their store of furs; and also accord them a vessel wherewith to sail away. This stipulation was granted; Iberville grimly remarking that it was extraordinary what a large number of officers there were for so small a company of men. He had already captured the captain of one of the vessels and the surgeon; and there now remained thirteen others who thus escaped scot-free from the clutches of the French. The amount of wages demanded was close upon two thousand pounds. All the others were made prisoners, including the pilots, of whom it is said there were a number who had been despatched by the Admiralty to acquire a knowledge of the Bay and Straits. All were carried off by Iberville to Quebec, and Marincourt left behind with thirty-six men to guard the two posts. The young commander did not this time proceed overland, but having got possession of the Company's ship, the *Hampshire*, he sailed northward for the Straits. He had scarcely reached the latitude of Southampton Island when an English ship hove in sight, proceeding in his direction. They came so close together as to exchange speech. Iberville had taken the precaution to hoist the English flag, and the presence of the prisoners caused implicit belief in his friendly pretensions. He learned that young Chouart, Radisson's nephew, was on board, and declares that he longed to attack openly the Company's ship, but the insufficiency of his force to guard the prisoners prevented him taking this course. He had, however, recourse to a stratagem which nearly succeeded. The captain of the other ship agreed to sail together in company through the Straits, and on the first clear weather to pay a visit to Iberville's ship. It was, it is almost needless to observe, the Frenchman's intention to seize the guileless Englishman and his companions the moment they had reached his deck. But storms intervening, this project fell through. The ships separated and did not meet again.

Iberville's treacherous plan.

The Hudson's Bay Company was not a little puzzled at the non-arrival of the *Hampshire*, which had been spoken thus

happily in Hudson's Straits. For a long time the vessel was believed to be lost; as, indeed, she was, but not quite in the manner apprehended by her owners. Possession was not regained for some years; and when the *Hampshire* sailed again for the Bay it was to encounter there complete destruction in battle.

As has been foreshadowed, in 1689 an event occurred which had been brewing ever since James had relinquished the governorship of the Company for the governorship of his subjects at large. William of Orange landed at Plymouth, and the Revolution in England put a new king on the English throne.



CHAPTER XIII.

1689–1696.

Company's Claims Mentioned in Declaration of War — Parliament Grants Company's Application for Confirmation of its Charter—Implacability of the Felt-makers—Fort Albany not a Success in the hands of the French—Denonville urges an Attack upon Fort Nelson—Lewis Despatches Tast with a Fleet to Canada—Iberville's Jealousy prevents its Sailing to the Bay—Governor Phipps Burns Fort Nelson — Further Agitation on the part of the French to Possess the West Main — Company Makes another attempt to Regain Fort Albany — Fort Nelson Surrendered to Iberville—Its Re-conquest by the Company.

Upon William the Third's accession to the throne, the Company renewed its claims to its property, and for reparation for the damages it had suffered at the hands of the French in time of peace.

"As to the article of the Company's losses, it will appear," it said, "by a true and exact estimate, that the French took from the Company, in full peace between 1682 and 1688, seven ships with their cargoes, and six forts and factories, from which they carried away great stores of goods laid up for trading with the Indians. The whole amounts to £38,332 15s."

To such effect was this memorial presented to the King that William caused the hostile proceedings of Lewis in the Company's territory to be inserted in one of the articles of his Declaration of War, in these words:—

"But that the French King should invade our Caribbee Islands and possess himself of our territories of the Province of New York and Hudson's Bay, in hostile manner, seizing our forts, burning our subjects' houses and enriching his people with the spoil of our goods and merchandises, detaining some of our subjects under the hardships of imprisonment, causing others to be inhumanly killed, and driving the rest to sea in a small vessel without food or necessaries to support them, are

actions not even becoming an enemy ; and yet he was so far from declaring himself so, that at that very time he was negotiating here in England, by his Ministers, a treaty of neutrality and good correspondence in America."

Much has been made by later writers, hostile to the Company, of a circumstance which soon afterwards took place.

Owing to the state of public feeling in England towards the Stewarts at the time of the Revolution, the Company, keenly alive to the fact of the exiled king's having been so recently its Governor, sought at the beginning of William's reign to strengthen its position by an Act of Parliament for the charter granted by Charles II. Why, have asked its enemies, if the Company had the utmost confidence in its charter did it resort to the Lords and Commons to have it confirmed? And why was this confirmation limited to but seven years? I have already answered the first question ; as to the second, the Company itself asked for no longer period. The proceeding was no secret ; it was done openly. Parliament made but one stipulation, and that at the instance of the Felt-makers' Company ; that the adventurers "should be obliged to make at least two sales of 'coat beaver' annually, and not exceeding four. These should be proportioned in lotts of about £100 sterling each, and not exceeding £200. In the intervals of public sales the Company should be debarred from selling beaver by private Contract, or at any price than was sett up at the last Publick sale."

The Company's charter confirmed.

The Company asked for a confirmation of its charter by Parliament as a prudent course in uncertain times ; and also in order to more firmly establish its claim to reparation for damages. The nation's representatives saw no reason why they should not issue a confirmation ; there being none, save the Felt-makers, to oppose it.

The charter being confirmed, it was decided that the nominal capital of the Company should be increased to £31,500, several good reasons being put forward in committee for thus trebling the stock. These reasons are quaintly enumerated as follows:

I—That the Company have actually in Warehouse above the value of their first original stock.

II—That they have set out an Expedition this Yeare in their Shipps and Cargoe to more than the Value of their First Stock again; the trading of which Goods may well be estimated, in expectation as much more.

III—That our Factories at Port Nelson River and New Severne are under an increasing Trade; and that our Returns in Beavers this yeare (by God's Blessing) are modestly expected to be worth 20,000*l.*

The Company increases its capital.

IV—Our Forts, Factories, Guns and other Materials, the prospect of new Settlements and further Trade, are also reasonably to be estimated at a considerable intrinsic Value.

V.—And lastly, our just Expectancy of a very considerable reparation and satisfaction from the French and the close of this War and the restoring our places and Trade at the Bottom of the Bay; which upon proof, hath been made out above 100,000*l.*

Some years later the Treaty of Ryswick, in securing to the French the fruits of Iberville's victory, powerfully affected for ill the fortunes of the Company. Nevertheless, the whole nation was then in sympathy with its cause, knowing that but for the continued existence of the Honourable Adventurers as a body corporate the chances of the western portion of the Bay reverting to the English were small.

But the Felt-makers were implacable. They would like to have seen the beaver trade in their own hands. At the expiration of the seven years for which the confirmation was allowed, they again, as will be shown, evinced, yet vainly, their enmity.

Because this parliamentary confirmation was limited to so short a period, some writers have conjectured that at the expiration of that period the charter ceased to be valid. So absurd a conclusion would scarcely appear to stand in need of refutation. Could those who pretend to draw this inference have been ignorant that if some of the rights conferred by the

charter required the sanction of Parliament, there were other rights conferred by it which required no such sanction, because they were within the prerogative of the Crown? Even assuming that at the end of the term for which the act of William and Mary was passed, such of the provisions of the charter (if there could be found any such) as derived their efficacy only from parliamentary support should be considered inefficient, still all the rights similar to those of the charters for former governments and plantations in America would continue to exist. That they were so regarded as existing is made evident by the repeated references to them in various subsequent international treaties and acts of Parliament. King George and his advisers completely recognized the Company as proprietors of a certain domain. In establishing the limits of the newly-acquired Province of Canada, it was enacted that it should be bounded on the north by "the territory granted to the Merchants-Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay," a boundary which by statute was long to subsist.

Fort Albany did not prove a success in the hands of the French. The Quebec Company were losing money, and they had no ships. They were, besides, severely handicapped by physical conditions, owing to the inaccessibility of the Bay by land and the impracticability of carrying merchandise by the overland route. It seemed clear that, after all, the trade of the Bay could only be made profitable by sea.* The French were consequently most anxious to exchange the forts on James' Bay for Fort Nelson, because they were aware that better furs were to be had in the north; and because it would enable them to intercept the tribes who hunted about Lake Nepigon.

Denonville is now found writing long despatches to Seignely, assuring him that their affairs at Hudson's Bay would prosper

* It has been truly observed that the protracted and bloody contest between the French and English for the possession of the Bay was the result of a desire of the Governor to have access to those waters, and the resolve of the latter to defeat this purpose. "The truth is," says Mr. Lindsay, "the fur trade was only profitable when carried on by water." At Quebec or Three Rivers forty beaver skins made a canoe load. A single canoe load of northern furs was worth six of the southern.

if the Northern Company continued to co-operate with and second the designs of Iberville, whose fixed resolve was to go and seize Fort Nelson. For that purpose Denonville regarded it as necessary that the Minister should inform M. de Lagny that the King desired the capture of that fort, and to "furnish Iberville with everything he requires to render his designs successful." The Governor himself thought one ship added to those they had captured in 1689 from the English would suffice. He sought to obtain for Iberville some honourable rank in the navy, as this would, he urged, excite honourable emulation amongst the Canadians who were ready to follow the sea. Denonville suggested a lieutenancy, adding his opinion that his young friend was "a very fine fellow, capable of rendering himself expert and doing good service." The plea of the Governor was successful and Lewis was pleased to confer upon Iberville the rank of lieutenant in the French Royal Navy, the first distinction of the kind then on record. It fired the blood and pride of not a few of the Canadian youth, one Peter Gauthier de Varennes amongst the rest. Many years later he, under the name of Verandrye, was the first of the great pioneers through the territories of the Great Company.

Denonville plans the capture of Fort Nelson.

All negotiations for an exchange of forts having fallen through, the *Compagnie du Nord* determined to make a valiant attempt to obtain their desires by force. For this purpose they made powerful application to the Court; and in the autumn of 1691 their petition resulted in the arrival at Quebec of Admiral Tast with no fewer than fourteen ships.

It was said in Quebec that while Lewis XIV. surprised his enemies by his celerity in taking the field in Europe, the vessels sent out to America by his order always started two or three months too late for Canada and the Bay. This tardiness, it was declared, was the sole cause of all the losses and want of success attending French enterprises in that part of the New World.*

* Charlevoix.

However this may be, there was beyond question another and not less potent reason for the failure which overtook the proposed expedition of Tast on behalf of the Northern Company. Iberville's successes had up to this moment tended to bolster up the waning popularity of the Company in Canada. This popular hero had just returned from the Bay with 80,000 francs value in beaver skins, and 6,000 livres in small furs, but he now refused point blank to have anything to do with the expedition. He did not care to share such glory and profit as he might obtain with his own followers, with the Company and Admiral Tast.

Without this powerful auxiliary and the support of the populace, Tast's fleet abandoned its expedition to the Bay, and sailed away to Acadia and Newfoundland.

Nevertheless, while Governor Phipps was in charge of Fort Nelson this year, a French frigate belonging to the enemy appeared at the entrance of Bourbon River. As it chanced that nearly the whole of his garrison were absent from the fort on a hunting expedition, it seemed to the Governor that armed resistance would be futile. Rather, therefore, than allow the fort to pass again into the hands of the French under circumstances so humiliating, he resolved to burn it, together with a large part of its merchandise, valued at about £8,000, well knowing that without the merchandise the French could not procure furs from the Indians.

Burning of Fort Nelson.

Whilst the flames of the fort were ascending, Phipps and three men he had with him retreated into ambush and established themselves with some Indians in the interior.

The Frenchman landed, saw the perdition of his hopes in the ruin of the fort and its contents, and returned to the ship with a few hatchets and knives as the sole trophy of his enterprise.

On the arrival of the Company's ship in the spring however, York Factory was re-built stronger and on a larger scale than before.

Iberville at this time finds great cause of complaint in the fact of the French Company's poverty, and its inability to

occupy the region after it had been won for them. More than a single ship was required ; and a larger number of men in the vicinity of Fort Nelson would have served to keep the English off perpetually.

In 1693 the Northern Company petitioned Pontchartrain, who had succeeded Seignely at Court, respecting operations in the Bay. The Company declared that it could hold everything if it were only enabled to seize Fort Nelson ; but that continued hostilities and losses had so weakened it as to oblige it to have recourse to his Excellency to obtain sufficient force in a suitable time to drive out the English.

In another petition it is alleged that this "single fort which remains in the possession of the English is of so much importance that the gain or loss of everything in Hudson's Bay depends upon it. The Company's establishment in Quebec, to carry on this commerce, claims anew the protection of your Excellency, that you may give it a sufficient force to enable it to become master of Fort Nelson, which the English took by an act of treason against this Company in time of peace. This they hope from the strong desire which you have for the aggrandizement of the kingdom, and from your affection for this colony."

Iberville crossed over to France, and met with a warm reception at Versailles. He unfolded his plans for the capture of Fort Nelson, stated what force he would require for this desirable purpose, and was promised two ships in the following spring.* Highly gratified with his success, he departed for home in the *Envieux*.

* Although by this action the French Court directly participated in and lent its support to the hostilities against the English, yet to all intents and purposes the war was between two commercial corporations.

The ruling spirits of the Northern Company were not unaware of the importance and power of the enemy they had to deal with. In a pamphlet published in France in 1692 there is amusing testimony to the consideration in which the London Company was held by the French.

"It is composed," says this authority, "of opulent merchants and noblemen of the first quality ; and it is known that the King himself is part proprietor, having succeeded to that emolument with the other belongings to King James II. So great are its profits that each member is worth at least £5,000 English sterling above what he was before he embarked in the fur traffic. There can be no secrecy about its intention, which is to subvert and subjugate the whole northern country to its sway."

The Hudson's Bay Company now made another effort to regain its fort at Albany. Three powerfully armed ships wintered at Fort Nelson and sailed thither in the spring of 1693.* From all accounts that had been received, it was not believed that the rival French Company was in a position to maintain a very strong force for an all-winter defence, especially since the alienation of Iberville. Forty men were landed, and approaching the post were met by a brisk fire, which failed to check the English advance. Much to their own astonishment, they were permitted to close upon the fort without check, and a ruse was suspected. A cautious entrance was therefore made: the premises were found apparently deserted. But at length, in a corner of the cellar, emaciated and covered with rags, a human being a victim to scurvy was discovered. His arms and legs were fastened together, and a heavy chain kept him close to the wall. While they were marvelling at this discovery, some of the sailors came to inform the captain that three Frenchmen had been seen at a distance flying as fast as their legs would carry them. Captain Grimington was not long left in doubt as to the facts: these three Frenchmen had formed the garrison of the fort St. Anne. The unlucky wretch they now beheld was a bushranger who, in a paroxysm of rage, had murdered the surgeon at the fort. Horrified, on recovering his reason, at what he had done, and fearing that the only witness of the deed, Father

The English regain Fort Albany.

* The expedition which thus wrested away from the French all the forts at the bottom of the Bay was in charge of Captain Grimington, an experienced naval officer, who had seen service in the late wars.

I have not been able to ascertain Grimington's fate, but in the Company's minute-book, under date of 19th of May, 1714, I find the following entry:—

"Mrs. Ann Grimington, widow of Captain Michael Grimington, deceased, having delivered in her petition to the Company, the same was read, and considering her poverty and the faithful services her husband performed for the Company, the Committee agreed to allow the said Mrs. Grimington twelve shillings per month for her subsistence, which the secretary is ordered to pay her every first Monday in the month, to commence the first Monday in June next. Interim, the secretary is ordered to pay her twenty shillings as charity, which is afterwards to be taken out of the poor-box." This is sufficiently strong evidence of the state into which the Company had fallen.

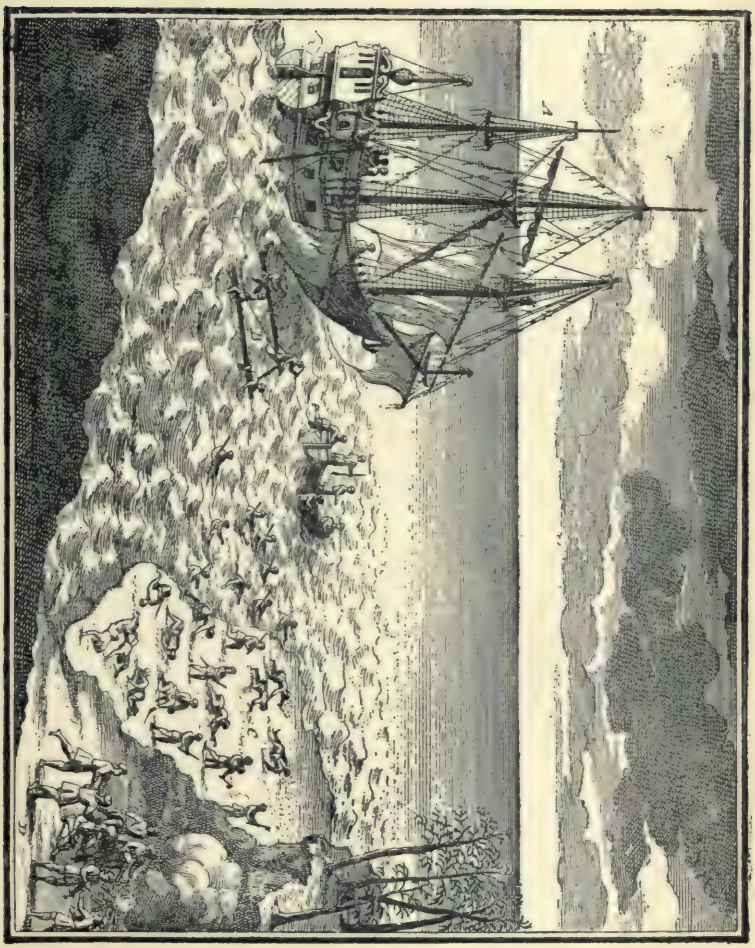
Dalmas, would betray him to the rest, he slew the priest also. The latter, with his expiring breath, disclosed his murderer, and the French, then ten in number, had chained the criminal in the cellar, not themselves relishing the task of his summary execution.

Iberville did not leave Quebec until the tenth* of August, and arrived at Fort Nelson, September 24th. Almost immediately he disembarked with all his people, also with cannons, mortars and a large quantity of ammunition. Batteries were thrown up about five hundred yards from the palisades, and upon these guns were mounted.† A bombardment now took place, lasting from the 25th of September to the 14th of October, when the governor was forced to surrender, owing to the danger of a conflagration as well as to the loss of several of his best men. On this occasion young Henry Kelsey‡ showed great bravery, and a report of his gallantry being forwarded to the Company, he was

* To illustrate the divergence of authorities in such matters, I may mention that while Jérémie, who took part in this expedition, calls the two ships the *Poli* and *Charente*, in which he is followed by Abbé Ferland. Father Marest, the aumonier of the crew, refers to the second ship as the *Salamandre*. His relation is entitled "Le Voyage du *Poli* et *Salamandre*." In the letter of Frontenac to the French minister (November 5, 1694) it is stated that Serigny commanded the *Salamandre*. *La Potherie* observes that the ships sent out in 1694 were the *Poli* and *Salamandre*. Furthermore, he declares, they sailed the 8th of August; Frontenac states the 9th, and Jérémie the 10th (*Jour de St. Laurent*). *La Potherie* and Jérémie agree on the date of their arrival, September 24th, although Ferland says it was the 20th.

† Jérémie gives us a detailed description of the fort in his "Relation." He says it was composed of four bastions, which formed a square of thirty feet, with a large stone house above and below. In one of these bastions was the storeroom for furs and merchandise, another served for provisions; a third was used by the garrison. All were built of wood. In a line with the first palisade there were two other bastions, in one of which lodged the officers, the other serving as a kitchen and forge. Between these two bastions was a crescent-shaped earthworks sheltering eight cannon, firing eight-pound balls, and defending the side of the fort towards the river. At the foot of this earthworks was a platform, fortified by six pieces of large cannon. There was no butt-range looking out upon the wood, which was a weak point; all the cannon and swivel-guns were on the bastions. In all, the armament consisted of thirty-two cannon and fourteen swivel-guns outside the fort and fifty-three inside; on the whole, calculated to make a stalwart defence.

‡ Kelsey was the earliest English explorer in the North-West. Mention of his achievements will be found in the course of Chapter XV.



LANDING OF IBERVILLE'S MEN AT PORT NELSON. *(From an old print.)*

presented with the sum of forty pounds as a token of their appreciation. This youth was destined to be long in the service of the Company, as first in command at Fort Nelson.

Iberville takes Fort Nelson.

Iberville accomplished his entry on the fifteenth of October. The French standard was hoisted and the fort christened Bourbon, and it being St. Theresa's Day, the river was given the name of that saint. The enemy did not come out of this business unscathed; they having lost several of their men, including a brother of Iberville.

Some of the English were kept prisoners, while others made their way as best they could to New Severn and Albany. At the time of the surrender, the fort was well furnished with merchandise and provisions, and this circumstance induced the French to remain for the winter, before returning to France.

On the 20th of the following July, Iberville departed for the straits in his two vessels, the *Poli* and *Salamandre*. He left sixty-seven men under the command of La Forest. Martigny became lieutenant, and Jérémie was appointed ensign, with the additional functions of interpreter and "director of commerce."

La Forest and his men were not long to enjoy security of trade and occupation however. A meeting of the Hudson's Bay Company was held the moment these outrages were reported. The King was besought to send a fleet of four ships to the rescue and recapture of Fort Nelson. But it was too late to sail that year. News of the proposed despatch of an English fleet having reached France, Serigny was sent in June, 1696, with two of the best craft procurable at Rochelle. Sailing three days before the English, the two French ships arrived two hours too late. It was instantly perceived that they were no match for the English, and accordingly they discreetly withdrew. As the Company's vessels occupied the mouth of the river, there was no safe landing place at hand. Both ships set sail again for France; but one, the *Hardi*, was destined never to reach her destination. She probably ran against ice at the mouth of the straits and went to the bottom with all on board.

The English commenced the attack on the fort August 29th. On the following day it was decided to land, and the French, seeing the strength of their force, had no alternative but surrender. Perchance by way of retaliation for the affairs of Albany and New Severn, the provisions of capitulation* were disregarded; all the French were made prisoners and carried to England. Possession was taken of a vast quantity of furs, and the English returned, well satisfied with their exploit; but not ignorant of the difficulties which surrounded the maintenance of such a conquest.

Fort Nelson surrenders to the English fleet.

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* Allen sent home to his superiors a copy of the capitulation proposals of the French Commandant. This document is not without interest. It is headed:—

CAPITULATION OF FORT YORK, 1696.

Articles of capitulation between William Allen, Commandant-in-Chief at Hays, or St. Therese River, and Sieur G. de la Forest, Commandant at Fort York or Bourbon, August 31, 1696.

I consent to give up to you my fort on the following conditions:—

1. That I and all my men, French as well as Indians, and my English servant, shall have our lives and liberty granted to us, and that no wrong or violence shall be exercised upon us or whatever belongs to us.

2. We shall march out of the fort without arms, to the beat of the drum, match lighted, ball in mouth, flags unfurled, and carry with us the two cannon which we brought from France.

3. We shall be transported altogether, in our own vessel, to Plaisance, a French Port in New Newfoundland. We do not wish to give up the fort till we have embarked, and we shall keep the French flag over the fort till we march out.

4. If we meet with our vessels there shall be a truce between us, and it shall be permitted to transport us with whatever belongs to us.

5. We shall take with us all the beaver skins and other merchandise obtained in trade this year, which shall be embarked with us upon our vessels.

6. All my men shall embark their clothes and whatever belongs to them without being subject to visitation, or robbed of anything.

7. In case of sickness during the voyage, you shall furnish us with all the remedies and medicines which we may require.

8. The two Frenchmen, who ought to return with the Indians, shall be received in the fort on their return, where they shall be treated the same as the English, and sent to Europe during the same year, or they shall be furnished with everything necessary to take them to Rochelle.

We shall have the full exercise of our religion, and the Jesuit priest, our missionary, shall publicly perform the functions of his ministry.

CHAPTER XIV.

1696-1697.

Imprisoned French Fur-Traders Reach Paris—A Fleet under Iberville Despatched by Lewis to the Bay—Company's four Ships precede them through the Straits—Beginning of a Fierce Battle—The *Hampshire* Sinks—Escape of the *Dering* and capture of the *Hudson's Bay*—Dreadful Storm in the Bay—Losses of the Victors—Landing of Iberville—Operations against Fort Nelson—Bailey Yields—Evacuation by the English.

The French prisoners captured in the Company's expedition of 1696 suffered an incarceration of nearly four months at Portsmouth. No sooner had their liberty been regained than they boarded a French brig bound for Havre, and on arrival in Paris lost little time in making known the condition of affairs at Hudson's Bay. Lewis and his Ministers, gazing upon this emaciated band of traders and bushrangers, could hardly refrain from taking immediate action to retrieve the situation. Precisely following the tactics of their enemy in the previous year, they engaged four men-of-war; which fleet was despatched to join Iberville, then at the port of Placentia in Newfoundland. The Court was well aware that there was no one man so thoroughly equipped at all points in knowledge of the Bay, and the conditions there of life and warfare, as this hero. Consequently, although numerous enough, all other offers to lead the expedition were rejected.

On the arrival of the French ships at Placentia, Iberville took command, embarking in the *Pelican*, of fifty guns. The others were the *Palmier*, the *Weesph*, the *Pelican*, and the *Violent*.*

But Fort Nelson was not to be captured without a struggle.

* A young Irishman, Edmund Fitz-Maurice, of Kerry, who had embraced the Church, and had served with James's army at the Battle of the Boyne, accompanied the expedition in the character of chaplain. He is alluded to by the French chronicler of the affair as "Fiche-Maurice de Kieri de la Maison du Milord Kieri en Irlande."

At almost the very moment the French fleet sailed, there departed from Plymouth four of the Company's ships, the *Hampshire*, the *Hudson's Bay*, the *Dering*, and *Owner's Love*, a fire-ship, the two former having been participants in the conquest of the previous year. The Company's fleet entered the straits only forty hours before the ships of the French ; and like them was much impeded by the ice, which was unusually troublesome. Passage was made by the enemy in the English wake. The *Profound*, commanded by Duqué, pushed past the currents, taking a northerly course, which brought her commander into full view of two of the Company's ships. Shots were exchanged ; but owing to the difficulties engendered by the ice, it was impossible to manœuvre with such certainty as to cut off the Frenchman's escape. While this skirmish was in progress, Iberville in the *Pelican* succeeded in getting past the English unknown to them, and reached the mouth of the Nelson River in sight of the fort. His presence, as may be imagined, greatly surprised and disturbed the Governor and the Company's servants ; for they had believed their own ships would have arrived in season to prevent the enemy from entering the straits. Several rounds of shot were fired as a signal, in the hope that a response would be made by the Company's ships which they hourly expected in that quarter.

Meeting of the French and English ships.

On his part the French commander was equally disturbed by the non-arrival of his three consorts, which the exigencies of the voyage had obliged him to forsake. Two days were passed in a state of suspense. At daybreak on the fifth of September three ships* were distinctly visible ; both parties joyfully believed they were their own. So certain was Iberville, that he immediately raised anchor and started to join the newcomers. He was soon undeceived, but the perception of his mistake in no way daunted him.

The Company's commanders were not prepared either for the daring or the fury of the Frenchman's onslaught. It is

* The fourth, the fire-ship *Owner's Love*, was never more heard of. It is supposed that, separated from the others, she ran into the ice and was sunk, with all on board.

true the *Pelican* was much superior to any of their own craft singly, being manned by nearly two hundred and fifty men, and boasting forty-four pieces of cannon. The Company's ships lined up, the *Hampshire* in front, the *Dering* next, with the *Hudson's Bay* bringing up the rear.

The combatants being in close proximity the battle began at half-past nine in the morning. The French commander came straight for the *Hampshire*, whose captain, believing it was his enemy's design to board, instantly lowered his mainsheet and put up his fore-top-sail. Contact having been



"HAMPSHIRE." "HUDSON'S BAY." "DERING."

by these means narrowly evaded, the scene of battle suddenly shifted to the *Pelican* and the *Dering*, whose mainsail was smitten by a terrific volley. At the same time the *Hudson's Bay*, veering, received a damaging broadside. The Company's men could distinctly hear the orders shouted by Iberville to both ships to discharge a musket fire into the *Dering's* forecastle, but in this move he was anticipated by the English sailors, who poured a storm of bullets in upon the Frenchman, accompanied by a broadside of grape, which wrought havoc with her sails. While the cries of the wounded on the *Pelican* could be distinctly heard, all three of the Company's ships opened fire, with the design of disabling her rigging. But the captain of the *Hudson's Bay*, seeing that he could not engage the *Pelican*, owing to Iberville's tactics, determined to run in front of her and give her the benefit of a constant hull

A fierce battle in the Bay.

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THE EVACUATION OF FORT NELSON. *(See page 166.)*

fire, besides taking the wind from her sails. Iberville observed the movement; the two English vessels were near; he veered around, and by a superb piece of seamanship came so near to the *Hampshire* that the crew of the latter saw that boarding was intended. Every man flew out on the main deck, with his pistol and cutlass, and a terrific broadside of grape on the part of the Englishman alone saved him.

The battle raged hotter and fiercer. The *Hampshire's* salvation had been only temporary; at the end of three hours and a half she began to sink, with all sails set. When this occurred, Iberville had ninety men wounded, forty being struck by a single broadside. Notwithstanding this, he decided at once to push matters with the *Hampshire's* companions, although the *Pelican* was in a badly damaged state, especially the forecastle, which was a mass of splinters.

The enemy made at once for the *Dering*, which, besides being the smallest ship, had suffered severely. She crowded on all sail and managed to avoid an encounter, and Iberville being in no condition to prosecute the chase, returned to the *Hudson's Bay*, which soon surrendered. Iberville was not destined, however, to reap much advantage from his prize, the *Hampshire*. The English flag-ship was unable to render any assistance to her and she soon went down with nearly all on board.*

To render the situation more distressing, no sooner had some ninety prisoners been made, than a storm arose; so that it became out of the question to approach the shore with design of landing. They were without a long-boat and each attempt to launch canoes in the boiling surf was attended with failure.

Night fell; the wind instead of calming, grew fiercer. The sea became truly terrible, seeking, seemingly, with all its

* Thus was concluded what was, in the opinion of the best authorities, French and English, one of the fiercest and bloodiest battles of the war.

"Toute la Marine de Rochefort croient que ce combat a ete un des plus rudes de cette Guerre," says La Potherie.

power to drive the *Pelican* and the *Hudson's Bay* upon the coast. The rudders of each ship broke; the tide rose and there seemed no hope for the crews whose destiny was so cruel. Their only hope in the midst of the bitter blast and clouds of snow which environed them, lay in the strength of their cables. Soon after nine o'clock the *Hudson's Bay* and its anchor parted with a shock.

A great storm.

"Instantly," says one of the survivors, "a piercing cry went up from our forecastle. The wounded and dead lay heaped up, with so little separation one from the other that silence and moans alone distinguished them. All were icy cold, and covered with blood. They had told us the anchor would hold; and we dreaded being washed up on the shore stiff the next morning."

A hugh wave broke over the main deck and the ship rocked desperately. Two hours later the keel was heard to split, and the ship was hurled rudderless to and fro in the trough of the sea.

By the French account, matters were in no more enviable state aboard the *Pelican;* Iberville, however, amidst scenes rivalling those just described, did his best to animate his officers and men with a spirit equalling his own.

"It is better," he cried, "to die, if we must, outside the bastions of Fort Bourbon than to perish here like pent sheep on board."

When morning broke, it was seen by the French that their ship was not yet submerged, and it was resolved to disembark by such means as lay in their power. The Company's servants were more fortunate. The *Hudson's Bay* had drifted eight miles to the south of the fort, and was wrecked on a bank of icy marshland, which at least constrained them to wade no deeper than their knees. The French, however, were forced to make their way through the icy water submerged to their necks, from the results of which terrible exposure no fewer than eighteen marines and seamen

Terrible plight of the shipwrecked French.

lost their lives. Once on shore they could not, like the English, look forward to a place of refuge and appease their hunger with provisions and drink. They were obliged, in their shivering, half frozen state, to subsist upon moss and seaweed, but for which indifferent nourishment they must inevitably have perished.

The Company's garrison witnessed the calamities which were overtaking the French, but not knowing how great their



"The enemy camped in a wood where, building several large fires, they sought to restore their spirits."

number, and assured of their hostility, did not attempt any acts of mercy. They perceived the enemy camped in a wood, less than two leagues distant, where, building several large fires they sought to restore their spirits by means of warmth and hot draughts of boiled herbs.

While the fort was being continually recruited by survivors of the two wrecked ships, the other three French vessels had

arrived on the scene. The fourth, the *Violent*, lay at the bottom of the Bay, having been sunk by the ice. The *Palmier* had suffered the loss of her helm, but was fortunate in not being also a victim of the storm. The French forces being now united, little time was lost by Iberville in making active preparations for the attack upon the fort.

On the 11th, the enemy attained a small wood, almost under the guns of the fort, and having entrenched themselves, lit numerous fires and made considerable noise in order to lend the impression to the English that an entrenchment was being thrown up. This ruse was successful, for the Governor gave orders to fire in that direction; and Iberville, seizing this opportunity, effected a landing of all his men and armaments from the ships.

The fort would now soon be hemmed in on all sides, and it were indeed strange if a chance shot or fire-brand did not ignite the timbers, and the powder magazine were not exploded. Governor Bailey was holding a council of his advisers when one of the French prisoners in the fort gave notice of the approach of a messenger bearing a flag of truce. He was recognized as Martigny. The Governor permitted his advance, and sent a factor to meet him and insist upon his eyes being bandaged before he would be permitted to enter.

Iberville demands surrender of the fort.

Martigny was conducted to where the council was sitting and there delivered Iberville's message, demanding surrender. He was instantly interrupted by Captain Smithsend, who, with a great show of passion, asked the emissary if it were not true that Iberville had been killed in the action. In spite of Martigny's denials, Smithsend loudly persisted in believing in Iberville's death; and held that the French were in sore straits and only made the present attack because no other alternative was offered to desperate men to obtain food and shelter. Bailey allowed himself to be influenced by Smithsend, and declined to yield to any of Martigny's demands. The latter returned, and the French instantly set up a battery near the fort and continued, amidst a hail of bullets, the work of landing their damaged stores and armaments. Stragglers

from the wreck of the *Hudson's Bay* continued all day to find their way to the fort, but several reached it only to be shot down in mistake by the cannon and muskets of their own men. On the 12th, after a hot skirmish, fatal to both sides, the Governor was again requested, this time by Sérigny, to yield up the fort to superior numbers.

"If you refuse we will set fire to the place, and accord you no quarter," was the French ultimatum.

"Set fire and be d——d to you!" responded Bailey.

He then set to work, with Smithsend, whose treatment at the hands of the French in the affair of the *Merchant of Perpetuana* was still vividly before him, to animate the garrison.

"Go for them, you dogs!" cried Bailey, "Give it to them hot and heavy; I promise you forty pounds apiece for your widows!"

Fighting in those days was attended by fearful mortality, and the paucity of pensions to the hero's family, perhaps, made the offer seem handsome. At any rate it seemed a sufficient incentive to the Company's men, who fought like demons.*

A continual fire of guns and mortars, as well as of muskets, was kept up. The Canadians sallied out upon a number of skirmishes, filling the air with a frightful din, borrowing from the Iroquois their piercing war-cries. In one of these sallies St. Martin, one of their bravest men, perished.

Under protection of a flag of truce, Sérigny came again to demand a surrender. It was the last time, he said, the request would be preferred. A general assault had been resolved upon by the enemy, who were at their last resort, living like beasts in the wood, feeding on moss, and to whom no extremity could be odious were it but an exchange for their present condition. They were resolved upon carrying the fort, even at the point of the bayonet and over heaps of their slain.

* "Ils avoient de tres habile cannoniers," Jérémie, an eye-witness, was forced to confess.

Bailey decided to yield. He sent Morrison to carry the terms of capitulation, in which he demanded all the peltries in the fort belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. This demand being rejected by the enemy, Bailey later in the evening sent Henry Kelsey with a proposition to retain a portion of their armament; this also was refused. There was now nothing for it but to surrender, Iberville having granted an evacuation with bag and baggage.

At one o'clock on the following day, therefore, the evacuation took place. Bailey, at the head of his garrison and a number of the crew of the wrecked *Hudson's Bay*, and six survivors of the *Hampshire*, marched forth from Fort York with drums beating, flag flying, and with arms and baggage. They hardly knew whither they were to go; or what fate awaited them. A vast and inhospitable region surrounded them, and a winter long to be remembered for its severity had begun. But to the French it seemed as if their spirits were undaunted, and they set forth bravely.

Evacuation of the English.

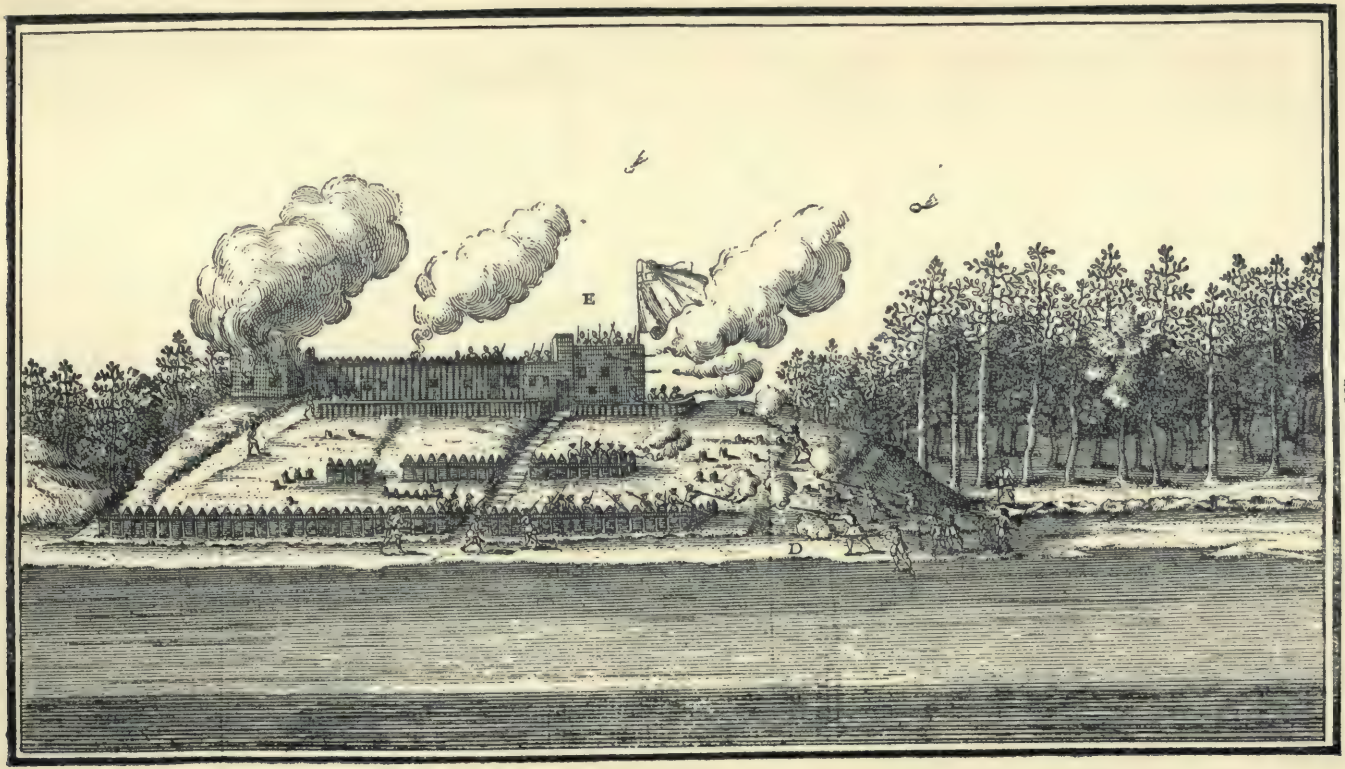
The enemy watched the retreat of the defeated garrison not without admiration, and for the moment speculation was rife as to their fate. But it was only for the moment. Too rejoiced to contemplate anything but the termination of their own sufferings, the Canadians hastened to enter the fort, headed by Boisbriant, late an ensign in the service of the Compagnie du Nord. Fort Nelson was once more in the hands of the French.*

The Company, too, was debarred from any attempt at

* "Ainsi le dernier poste," Garneau exclaims, "que les English avaient dans le baie d'Hudson tombé en notre pouvoir, et la France resta seule maitresse de cette region. (Tome II., p. 137.)

But Garneau overlooked the three forts in James' Bay retaken by the English in 1693; one of which, Fort Anne or Chechouan, he mistook for Fort Nelson. At any rate Fort Albany or Chechouan remained in possession of the Company from 1693; and they never lost it.

It was unsuccessfully attacked by Menthel in 1709.



CAPTURE OF FORT NELSON BY THE FRENCH.
(From a Contemporary Print appearing in M. de la Potherie's "Relation.")

reconquest, because of the Treaty* just concluded at Ryswick, which yielded the territory which had been the scene of so much commerce, action and bloodshed to the subjects of the Most Christian King.

* So strongly has the Treaty of Ryswick been interpreted in favour of France, that some historians merely state the fact that by it she retained all Hudson's Bay, and the places of which she was in possession at the beginning of the war. The commissioners having never met to try the question of right, things remained *in statu quo.* Now, whatever the commissioners might have done, had they ever passed judgment on the cause the Treaty provided they should try, they could not have given Fort Albany to the British, for it was one of the places taken by the French during the preceding peace, and retaken by the British during the war, and, therefore, adjudged in direct terms of the Treaty itself to belong to France. Thus, then, it will be seen, declared the opponents of the Company, that the only possession held by the Hudson's Bay Company during the sixteen years that intervened between the Treaty of Ryswick and the Treaty of Utrecht was one to which they had no right, and which the obligations of the Treaty required should be given up to France.—*Report of Ontario Boundary Commission.*



CHAPTER XV.

1698–1713.

Petition Presented to Parliament Hostile to Company — Seventeenth Century Conditions of Trade—*Coureurs de Bois*—Price of Peltries—Standard of Trade Prescribed—Company's Conservatism—Letters to Factors—Character of the Early Governors—Henry Kelsey—York Factory under the French—Massacre of Jérémie's Men—Starvation amongst the Indians.

Before the news of the catastrophe could reach England, in April, 1698, there was presented to Parliament a petition appealing against the confirmation of the privileges and trade granted to the Company in 1690.

The principal reason alleged for this action was the exorbitant price of beaver which it was contended turned away an immense amount of Indian trade, which reverted to the French in Canada.

Another reason given was the undesirable monopoly which caused English dealers, while paying the highest prices for beaver, to get the worst article; the best travelling to Russia and other continental countries. In this petition, concocted by enemies of the Company envious of its success, it was insinuated that the Company's trade had been of no use save to increase the practice of stock-jobbing.

The Company replies to its enemies.

To this the Company made reply that "it was well known that the price of beaver had decreased one-third since its own establishment; and that themselves, far from hindering the trade, encouraged it by every means in their power, being anxious to be relieved of an over-stocked commodity." Herein they referred to the enormous quantity of furs stored in their warehouse, for which, during the stringency of continued trade they were obliged to retain and pay repeated taxes upon.* As for sending goods to Russia it was only of

* "Six or seven times over," the Company say in their reply.

late years that the Company had extended its trade to that and other foreign countries and for no other cause than that reasonable prices could not be obtained in England.

Although two London guilds, the Skinner's Company and the Felt-makers' Company, joined issue with the Honourable Adventurers, the fate of the petition was sealed. On account of the misfortunes which had overtaken the Company, together with the presence of other and weightier matters, for Parliamentary consideration, the petition was laid on the table, and from the table it passed to the archives, where, together with the Act of 1690, it lay forgotten for a century and a half.

It will be diverting, at this juncture in the general narrative, to glance at seventeenth century conditions of life and commerce in the domain of the Company.

Even at so early a period as 1690 was the method of transacting trade with the Indians devised and regulated. The tribes brought down their goods, beaver skins, martens, foxes and feathers, to the Factory and delivered them through a small aperture in the side of the storehouse. They entered the stockade three or four at a time; trading one by one at the window over which presided the traders. The whole of the actual trading of the Factory was in the hands of two officials known as traders. None other of the Company's servants at any fort were permitted to have direct intercourse with the Indians, save in exceptional circumstances. The trade was chiefly carried on in summer when the rivers were free from ice, although occasionally the natives in the immediate region of the factories came down in winter; the factors never refusing to trade with them when they so came. No partiality was shown to particular tribes, but the actual hunters were favoured more than those who merely acted as agents or carriers. It was not unusual for the chief factors, as the Governors came to be called after 1713, to make presents to the chiefs in order to encourage them to bring down as many of their tribe the ensuing year as possible.

Method of trade with the Indians.

Before the era of the standard of trade, it was customary at all the forts, as it was at one or two long afterwards, for remuneration for the furs of the savages to be left at the chief factor's discretion. Many things conspired to alter the values from season to season, and even from day to day, but no cause was so potent as the contiguous rivalry of the French. When the French were close at hand in the vicinity of Fort



TRADING WITH THE INDIANS.

Nelson, as they were from 1686 to 1693, the price of beaver would fluctuate with surprising rapidity. It should be borne in mind that the western country at this period, and for long afterwards, was frequented by roving, adventurous parties of *coureurs des bois*, whose activity in trade tended to injure the Company's business. Even an enactment prescribing death for all persons trading in the interior of the country without

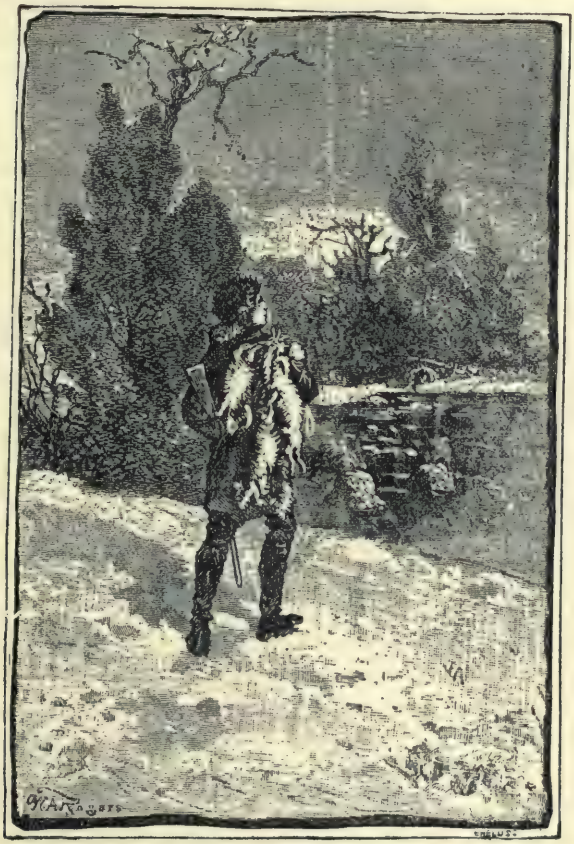
a license, had proved insufficient to abate their numbers or their activity.

The Hudson's Bay Company seem to have some cognizance of this state of affairs, and were wont to put down much of the depredations it suffered at the hands of the French to the unkempt multitude of bushrangers. In one document it describes them as "vagrants," and La Chesnaye, who had been the leading spirit of the Quebec Company, was ready to impute to them much of the woes of the fur-trade, as well as the greater part of the unpleasant rivalries which had overtaken the French and their neighbours. One day it would be carried like wild-fire amongst the tribe who had come to barter, that the French were giving a pound of powder for a beaver; that a gun could be bought from the English for twelve beaver. In an instant there was a stampede outside the respective premises, and a rush would be made for the rival establishment. Fifty miles for a single pound of powder was nothing to these Indians, who had often journeyed two whole months in the depth of winter, endured every species of toil and hardship in order to bring down a small bundle of peltries; nor when he presented himself at the trader's window was the Indian by any means sure what his goods would bring. He delivered his bundles first, and the trader appraised them and gave what he saw fit. If a series of wild cries and bodily contortions ensued, the trader was made aware that the Indian was dissatisfied with his bargain, and the furs were again passed back through the aperture. This was merely a form; for rarely did the native make a practical repentance of his bargain, however unsatisfactory it might appear to him. It is true the Indian was constant in his complaint that too little was given for his furs; but no matter what the price had been this would have been the case. Apart from dissatisfaction being an ineradicable trait in the Indian character, the contemplation of the sufferings and privations he had undergone to acquire his string of beads, his blanket, or his hatchet, must have aroused in him all his fund of pessimism.

Activity of "coureurs des bois."

In 1676 the value of the merchandise exported did not exceed £650 sterling. The value of the furs imported was close upon £19,000.

In 1678 the first standard was approved of by the Company on the advice of one of its governors, Sargeant, but it does not appear to have been acted upon for some years. The actual



A "Coureur des Bois."

tariff was not fixed and settled to apply to any but Albany fort, and a standard was not filed at the Council of Trade until 1695. It originally covered forty-seven articles, later increased to sixty-three, and so remained for more than half a century. At first, as has been noted in an earlier chapter, the aborigines were content with beads and toys, and no doubt the bulk of

the supplies furnished them might have continued for a much longer period to consist of these baubles and petty luxuries had not the policy of the Company been to enrich the Indians (and themselves) with the arms and implements of the chase. Gradually the wants of the savages became wider, so that by the time, early in the eighteenth century, the French had penetrated into the far western country, these wants comprised many of the articles in common use amongst civilized people. The standard of trade alluded to was intended to cover the relative values at each of the Company's four factories. Yet the discrepancy existing between prices at the respective establishments was small.

Prices paid for furs.

In 1718 a blanket, for example, would fetch six beavers at Albany and Moose, and seven at York and Churchill. In nearly every case higher prices were to be got from the tribes dealing at York and Churchill than from those at the other and more easterly settlements, often amounting to as much as thirty-three per cent. This was illustrated in the case of shirts, for which three beavers were given in the West Main, and only a single beaver at East Main. The Company took fifteen beavers for a gun; whereas, when Verandrye appeared, he was willing to accept as small a number as eight. Ten beavers for a gun was the usual price demanded by the French. It may be observed that a distinguishing feature of the French trade in competition with the Company was that they dealt almost exclusively in light furs, taking all of that variety they could procure, the Indians bringing to the Company's settlements all the heavier furs, which the French refused at any price, owing to the difficulty of land transportation. These difficulties, in the case of the larger furs, were so great that it is related that upon innumerable occasions the savages themselves, when weakened by hunger, used to throw overboard all but mink, marten and ermine skins rather than undergo the painful labour of incessant portages.

It must not be inferred, however, that the factors ever adhered strictly in practice to the standard prescribed and

regulated from time to time by the Company. The standard was often privately doubled, where it could be done prudently, so that where the Company directed one skin to be taken for such or such an article, two were taken. The additional profit went into the hands of the chief factor, and a smaller share to the two traders, without the cognizance of the Company, and was called the overplus trade.

Occasionally, far seeing, active spirits amongst its servants strove to break through the policy of conservatism which distinguished its members; but where they succeeded it was only for a short period; and the commerce of the corporation soon reverted to its ancient boundaries. But this apparent attitude is capable of explanation. The Company were cognizant, almost from the first, that the trade they pursued was capable of great extension. One finds in the minute-books, during more than forty years from the time of Radisson and Groseilliers, partner after partner arising in his place to enquire why the commerce, vastly profitable though it was, remained stationary instead of increasing.

Stationary character of the Company's trade.

"Why are new tribes not brought down? Why do not our factors seek new sources of commerce?" A motion directing the chief factor to pursue a more active policy was often put and carried. But still the trade returns, year after year, remained as before. Scarce a season passed without exhortations to its servants to increase the trade. "Use more diligence," "prosecute discoveries," "draw down distant tribes," form the burden of many letters.

"We perceive," writes the Company's secretary in 1685 to Sargeant, "that our servants are unwilling to travel up into the country by reason of danger and want of encouragement. The danger, we judge, is not more now than formerly; and for their encouragement we shall plentifully reward them, when we find they deserve it by bringing down Indians to our factories, of which you may assure them. We judge Robert Sandford a fit person to travel, having the linguæ and understanding the trade of the country; and upon a promise of Mr. Young (one of our Adventurers) that he should travel, for

which reason we have advanced his wages to £30 per annum, and Mr. Arrington, called in the Bay, Red-Cap, whom we have again entertained in our service; as also John Vincent, both which we do also judge fit persons for you to send up into the country to bring down trade." To this the Governor replied that Sandford was by no means disposed to accept the terms their Honours proposed, but rather chose to go home. "Neither he nor any of your servants will travel up the country, although your Honours have earnestly desired it, and I pressed it upon those proposals you have hinted."

I have already shown why the Company's wishes in this respect were not fruitful; that the character of the men in the Company's employ was not yet adapted to the work in hand. Its servants were not easily induced to imperil their lives; they gained little in valour or hardihood from their surroundings. They were shut up in the forts, as sailors are shut up in a ship, scarcely ever venturing out in winter, and hardly ever holding converse with a savage in his wild state. In vain, for the most part, were such men stirred to enterprise; and so this choice and habit of seclusion grew into a rule with the Company's employees; and the discipline common to the ship, or to contracted bodies, became more and more stringent. The Company's policy was nearly always dictated by the advice of their factors, but it can be shown that these were not always wise, dreading equally the prospect of leading an expedition into the interior, and the prestige which might ensue if it were entrusted to a subordinate.

Character of the Company's factors.

A discipline ludicrous when contrasted with the popular impression regarding the fur-trader's career, was maintained in the early days. It was the discipline of the quarter-deck, and surprised many of the youth who had entered the Company's employ expecting a life of pleasure and indulgence. Many of the governors were resembled, Bridgar and Bailey being surly, violent men, and were, indeed, often chosen for these qualities by the Company at home.

It is singular but true, that in the days of our ancestors a choleric temper was considered an unfailing index of the

masterful man. In both branches of the King's service, on sea and on land, there seemed to have been no surer sign of a man's ability to govern and lead, than spleen and tyranny; and many an officer owed his promotion and won the regard of the Admiralty and the War Office by his perpetual exhibition of the traits and vices of the martinet. One of the Company's governors, Duffell, was wont to order ten lashes to his men on the smallest provocation. Another named Stanton, the governor at Moose Factory, declared he would whip any man, even to the traders, without trial if he chose; and this declaration he more than once put into practice. The whipping of two men, Edward Bate and Adam Farquhar, at Moose Factory, almost occasioned a mutiny there. The death of one Robert Pilgrim, from a blow administered by the chief factor, created a scandal some years later in the century. It was the practice of the early governors to strike the Indians when they lost their own tempers or for petty offences.

It is diverting to compare nineteenth century life at the factories, on its religious, moral and intellectual side, to what obtained in the early days. In Governor Stanton's time, out of thirty-six men only six were able to read. There was neither clergyman nor divine worship. The men passed their time in eating and sleeping. Occasionally, Indian squaws were smuggled into the fort, at the peril of the governor's displeasure, for immoral purposes. The displeasure of the governor was not, however, excited on the grounds of morality, for it was nearly always the case that the governor had a concubine residing on the premises or near at hand; and it was observed in 1749 by a servant of thirty years' standing in the Company's employ, that at each fort most of the half-breed children in the country claimed paternity of the one or other of the factors of the Company.

Life at the Company's factories.

To return to the question of the extension of trade, there were from time to time governors and servants who evinced a zeal and love for adventure which contrasted favourably with that of their fellows. Their exploits, however, when

compared with those of the hardier race of French-Canadian bushrangers were tame enough. In 1673 Governor Bailey summoned all the servants of the fort to appear before him, and informed them that it was the Company's wish that some amongst them should volunteer to find out a site for a new fort. Three young men presented themselves, two of whom afterwards became governors of the Company. The names of



AN EARLY RIVER PIONEER.

these three were William Bond, Thomas Moore and George Geyer. Some years later Bond was drowned in the Bay; but his two companions continued for some years to set an example which was never followed; and of which they seem finally to have repented. Indeed, almost without exception, once a fort was built the servants seem to have clung closely to it; and it was not until the year 1688 that a really brave, adven-

turous figure, bearing considerable resemblance to the bush-rangers of the past, and the explorers of the future, emerges into light.

Henry Kelsey, a lad barely eighteen years of age, was the forerunner of all the hardy British pioneers of the ensuing century. He is described as active, "delighting much in Indians' company; being never better pleased than when he is travelling amongst them." Young as he was, Kelsey volunteered to find out a site for a fort on Churchill River. No record exists of this voyage; but a couple of years later he repeated it, and himself kept a detailed diary of his tour.

Kelsey's Voyage.

In this journal the explorer states that he received his supplies on the 5th of July, 1691. He sent the Assiniboines ten days before him, and set out for Dering's Point to seek the remainder of their tribe. At this place it was the custom for the Indians to assemble when they went down the coast on trading expeditions. Kelsey soon overtook them, and accompanied them to the country of the Naywatamee Poets, the journey consuming fifty-nine days. He travelled first by water seventy-one miles from Dering's Point, and there beached his canoes and continued by land a distance of three hundred and sixteen miles, passing through a wooded country. At the end of this came prairie lands for forty-six miles, intersected by a small shallow river scarcely a hundred yards wide. Crossing ponds, woods and champaign for eighty-one miles more, discovering many buffalo and beavers, the young explorer retraced his steps fifty-four miles, and there met the tribe of which he was in search. Kelsey did not accomplish this journey without meeting with many adventures. On one occasion the Naywatamee Poets left him asleep on the ground. During his slumber the fire burnt the moss upon which he was lying and entirely consumed the stock of his gun, for which he was obliged to improvise from a piece of wood half dry. On another occasion, he and an Indian were surprised by a couple of grisly bears. His companion made his escape to a tree, while Kelsey, his retreat cut off, hid himself in a clump of high willows. The bears perceiv-

ing the Indian in the branches made directly for him, but Kelsey observing their action levelled his gun and killed one of the animals, the other bear bounding towards the place from which the shots came, and not finding the explorer, returned to the tree, when he was brought down by Kelsey's second shot. Good fortune attended this exploit, for it attained for the young man the name among the tribes of Miss-top-ashish, or "Little Giant." He returned to York Factory after this first expedition, apparelled after the manner of his Indian companions, while at his side trudged a young woman with whom he had gone through the ceremony of marriage after the Indian fashion. It was his wish that Mistress Kelsey should enter with her husband into the court, but this desire quickly found an opponent in the Governor, whose scruples, however, were soon undermined when the explorer flatly declined to resume his place and duties in the establishment unless his Indian wife were admitted with him.

Thus, then, it is seen that in 1691, forty years before Verandrye's voyages of discovery, this young servant of the Hudson's Bay Company, had penetrated to no slight extent into the interior. He had crossed the Assiniboine country, seen for the first time among the English and French the buffaloes of the plain, he had been attacked by the grisly bears which belong to the far west; and in behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company had taken possession of the lands he traversed, and secured for his masters the trade of the Indians hitherto considered hostile.

Although the Governor hoped that the encouragement noted in the case of Kelsey, together with the advance of salary, would stimulate other young men to follow his example, yet, strange to say, none came forward. The day of the Henrys, the Mackenzies, the Thompsons and the Frobishers had not yet dawned.

For many years after this the Company was in constant apprehension that its profits would be curtailed by tribal wars.

"Keep the Indians from warring with one another, that

they may have more time to look after their trade," was a frequently repeated injunction. "If you prevent them from fighting they will bring a larger quantity of furs to the Factory," they wrote on one occasion to Geyer. The Governor admitted the premise, "but," said he, "perhaps your Honours will tell me how I am going to do it." The Company devoted a whole meeting to consider the matter, and decided that nothing was easier, provided their instructions were implicitly obeyed.

Effect of Indian wars on the Company's business.

N° XIX.

STANDARD of TRADE at the several FACTORIES of the *HUDSON's BAY* COMPANY, subsisting this present Year 1748,

NAMES of GOODS.		ARO		MRO		YF		CR	
		Quantity valued	Beaver	Quantity valued	Beaver	Quantity valued	Beaver	Quantity valued	Beaver
Bends, large Milk	Pounds	1/3	1	1/2	1	...	...	...	...
of Colours		1/4	1	1/4	1	...	...	...	...
of all Sorts		...	...	...	...	1	1	2	2
Kettles, Brass, of all Sizes		1	1	1	1	1	1 1/2	1	1 1/2
Black-Lead		1	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
Powder		1 1/2	1	1 1/2	1	1	1	1	1
Shot		5	1	5	1	4	1	4	1
Sugar, Brown		2	1	2	1	...	...	...	...
Tobacco, *Brazil*		1	1	1	1	1/4	1	1/4	1
Leaf		1 1/2	1	1 1/2	1	1	1	1	1
Roll		1 1/4	1	1 1/4	1	1	1	1	1
Thread		1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
Vermilion	Ounces	1 1/2	1/4	1 1/2	1	1	1	1	1
Brandy, *English*	Gallons	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4
Waters, White or Red		1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4 Broad-

FAC-SIMILE OF COMPANY'S STANDARD OF TRADE.

"Tell them what advantages they may make," they wrote; "that the more furs they bring, the more goods they will be able to purchase of us, which will enable them to live more comfortably and keep them from want in a time of scarcity. Inculcate better morals than they yet understand; tell them that it doth nothing advantage them to kill and destroy one another, that thereby they may so weaken themselves that the wild ravenous beasts may grow too numerous for them, and destroy them that survive." If Geyer delivered this message to the stern and valorous chiefs with whom he came in contact, they must have made the dome of heaven ring with

scornful laughter. He was obliged to write home that fewer savages had come down than in former seasons because they expected to be attacked by their enemies. The Company then responded shortly and in a business-like manner, that if fair means would not prevail to stop these inter-tribal conflicts, that the nation beginning the next quarrel was not to be supplied for a year with powder or shot "which will expose them to their enemies, who will have the master of them and quite destroy them from the earth, them and their wives and children. This," adds the secretary, and in a spirit of true prophecy, "must work some terror amongst them."

The French at Michilimackinac.

A potent cause contributed to the lack of prosperity which marked Port Nelson under the French *régime*. It was the exploitation of the west by an army of traders and bushrangers. The new post of Michilimackinac had assumed all the importance as a fur-trading centre which had formerly belonged to Montreal. The French, too, were served by capable and zealous servants, none more so than Iberville himself, the new Governor of the Mississippi country.* His whole ambition continued to be centred upon driving out the English from the whole western and northern region, and destroying forever their trade and standing with the aborigines, and none more than he more ardently desired the suppression of the *coureur de bois*. "No Frenchmen," he declared, "should be allowed to follow the Indians in their hunts, as it tends to keep them hunters, as is seen in Canada; and when they are in the woods they do not desire to become tillers of the soil."

At the same time the value of the bushrangers to the French *régime* was considerable in damaging the English on the Bay.

"It is certain," observed one of their defenders, "that if the articles required for the upper tribes be not sent to

* After the battle of Port Nelson, Iberville had returned to France leaving Martigny in command of the Fort. His subsequent career may be read elsewhere; the Bay was no longer to be the theatre of his exploits. He perished in 1707 at Havana.

Michilimackinac, the Indians will go in search of them to Hudson's Bay, to whom they will convey all their peltries, and will detach themselves entirely from us."

The bushrangers penetrated into the wilderness and intercepted the tribes, whose loyalty to the English was not proof against liquor and trinkets served on the spot, for which otherwise they would have to proceed many weary leagues to the Bay.

The Company began to experience some alarm at the fashion the trade was sapped from their forts at Albany and Moose.* The Quebec Company was in the same plight with regard to Port Nelson.

The Western Company.

An association of French merchants, known as the Western Company, sprang up in the early days of the eighteenth century and many forts and factories were built in the Mississippi region. Its promoters expected great results from a new skin until now turned to little account, that of bison, great herds of which animal had been discovered roaming the western plains. M. de Juchereau, with thirty-four Canadians, established a post on the Wabash, in the name of the Western Company. Here, he writes, he collected in a short time fifteen thousand buffalo skins.

From 1697 to 1708 a series of three commandants were appointed, one of whom now administered the affairs at Fort Bourbon, which however never assumed the importance which had attached to it under the English rule.

There is one romantic episode which belongs to this period, serving to relieve by its vivid, perhaps too vivid, colouring, the long sombreness of the French *régime*. It was the visit in 1704 of an officer named Lagrange and his suite from France. In the train of this banished courtier came a number of gallant youths and fair courtesans; and for one brief season Fort Bourbon rang with laughter and revelry. Hunting parties were undertaken every fine day; and many trophies of

* At Albany they were surrounded by the French on every side, a circumstance which greatly sapped their commerce. Yet, even at this period, the importation of beaver and other peltries from the single fort remaining to them was above thirty thousand annually.

the chase were carried back to France. Have ever the generations of quiet English servants and Scotch clerks snatched a glimpse, in their sleeping or waking dreams, of those mad revels, a voluptuous scene amidst an environment so sullen and sombre ?

In the year 1707 Jérémie, the lieutenant, obtained permission of the Company to return to France on leave. He succeeded in obtaining at court his nomination to the post of successor to the then commandant, Delisle. After a year's absence he returned to Port Nelson, to find matters in a shocking state. No ships had arrived from France, and stores and ammunition were lacking. A few days after his arrival, Delisle was taken seriously ill, and expired from the effects of cold and exposure.

For a period of six years Jérémie continued to govern Fort Bourbon, receiving his commission not from the Company but direct from the King himself, a fact of which he seems very proud.

Jérémie's tenure of office was marked by a bloody affair, which fortunately had but few parallels under either English or French occupation. Although the tribes in the neighbourhood were friendly and docile, they were still capable, upon provocation, to rival those Iroquois who were a constant source of terror to the New England settlers.

In August, 1708, Jérémie sent his lieutenant, two traders and six picked men of his garrison to hunt for provisions. They camped at nightfall near a band of savages who had long fasted and lacked powder, which, owing to its scarcity, the French did not dare give them.

Round about these unhappy savages, loudly lamenting the passing of the English dominion when powder and shot was plenty, were the heaps of furs which to them were useless. They had journeyed to the fort in all good faith, across mountain and torrent, as was their custom, only to find their goods rejected by the white men of the fort, who told them to wait. When the French hunting party came to encamp near them, several of the younger braves amongst the Indians crept up to where they feasted, and returned with the news

to their comrades. The tribe was fired with resentment. Exasperated by the cruelty of their fate, they hatched a plan of revenge and rapine. Two of their youngest and comeliest women entered the assemblage of the white men, and by seductive wiles drew two of them away to their own lodges. The remaining six, having eaten and drunk their fill, and believing in their security, turned to slumber. Hardly had the two roysterers arrived at the Indian camp than instead of the cordial privacy they expected, they were confronted by two score famished men drawn up in front of the lodges, knives in hand and brandishing hatchets. All unarmed as they were, they were unceremoniously seized and slain. As no trace was ever found of their bodies, they were, although denied by the eye-witness of the tragedy, a squaw, probably devoured on the spot. The younger men now stole again to the French camp and massacred all the others in their sleep, save one, who being wounded feigned death, and afterwards managed to crawl off. But he, with his companions, had been stripped to the skin by the savages, and in this state, and half-covered with blood, he made his way back to the fort. The distance being ten leagues, his survival is a matter of wonder, even to those hardy men of the wilderness.

Indian Treachery.

The Governor naturally apprehended that the Indians would attempt to follow up their crime by an attack upon the fort.

As only nine men remained in the garrison, it was felt impossible to defend both of the French establishments. He therefore withdrew the men hastily from the little Fort Philipeaux near by, and none too quickly, for the Indians came immediately before it. Finding nobody in charge they wrought a speedy and vigorous pillage, taking many pounds of powder which Jérémie had not had time to transfer to Bourbon.

The condition of the French during the winter of 1708-9 was pitiable in the extreme. Surrounded by starving, bloodthirsty savages, with insufficient provisions, and hardly ever daring to venture out, they may well have received the tidings

with joy that the indomitable English Company had re-established a Factory some leagues distant, and were driving a brisk trade with the eager tribes.

It was not until 1713 that the French Fur Company succeeded in relieving its post of Fort Bourbon. It had twice sent ships, but these had been intercepted on the high seas by the English and pillaged or destroyed. The *Providence* arrived the very year of the Treaty of Utrecht.

But wretched as was the case of the French, that of the Indians was lamentable indeed. A few more years of French occupation and the forests and rivers of the Bay would know its race of hunters no more. Many hundreds lay dead within a radius of twenty leagues from the fort, the flesh devoured from their bones. They had lost the use of the bow and arrow since the advent of the Europeans, and they had no resource as cultivators of the soil; besides their errant life forbade this. Pressed by a long hunger, parents had killed their children for food; the strong had devoured the weak. One of these unhappy victims of civilization and commercial rivalries, confessed to the commandant that he had eaten his wife and six children. He had, he declared, not experienced the pangs of tenderness until the time came for him to sacrifice his last child, whom he loved more than the others, and that he had gone away weeping, leaving a portion of the body buried in the earth.

Starvation amongst the Indians.



CHAPTER XVI.

1697–1712.

Company Seriously Damaged by Loss of Port Nelson—Send an Account of their Claims to Lords of Trade—Definite Boundary Propositions of Trade—Lewis anxious to Create Boundaries—Company look to Outbreak of War—War of Spanish Succession breaks out—Period of Adversity for the Company—Employment of Orkneymen—Attack on Fort Albany—Desperate Condition of the French at York Fort—Petition to Anne.

The Treaty of Ryswick* had aimed a severe blow at the prosperity of the Company,† in depriving them of that important quarter of the Bay known as Port Nelson.

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* By the Treaty of Ryswick, Great Britain and France were respectively to deliver up to each other generally whatever possessions either held before the outbreak of the war, and it was specially provided that this should be applicable to the places in Hudson's Bay taken by the French during the peace which preceded the war, which, though retaken by the British during the war, were to be given up to the French. Commissioners were to be appointed in pursuance of the Treaty to determine the rights and pretensions which either nation had to the places in Hudson's Bay. But these commissioners never met. The commissioners must, however, have been bound by the text of the Treaty wherever it was explicit. They *might*, said the Company's opponents, have decided that France had a right to the whole, but they could *not* have decided that Great Britain had a right to the whole. They would have been compelled to make over to France all the places she took during the peace which preceded the war, for in that the Treaty left them no discretion. The following are the words of the Treaty:—"But the possession of those places which were taken by the French, during the peace that preceded this present war, and were retaken by the English during the war, shall be left to the French by virtue of the foregoing article." Thus the Treaty of Ryswick recognized and confirmed the right of France to certain places in Hudson's Bay distinctly and definitely, but it recognized no right at all on the part of Great Britain; it merely provided a tribunal to try whether she had any or not.

† "Therefore, we shall proceed to inform your Lordships of the present melancholy prospects of our trade and settlement in Hudson's Bay, and that none of his Majesty's plantations are left in such a deplorable state as those of this Company, for by their great losses by the French, both in times of peace as well as during the late war, together with the hardships they lie under by the late Treaty of Ryswick, they may be said to be the only mourners by the peace. They cannot but inform your Lordships that the only settlement that the Company now have left in Hudson's Bay (of seven they formerly possessed) is Albany Fort,

Although now on the threshold of a long period of adversity, the Merchants-Adventurers, losing neither hope nor courage, continued to raise their voice for restitution and justice. Petition after petition found its way to King, Commons, and the Lords of Trade and Plantations.

The Company's claims.

In May, 1700, the Company were requested by the Lord of Trade and Plantations to send an account of the encroachments of the French on Her Majesty's Dominion in America within the limits of the Company's charter; to which the Company replied, setting forth their right and title, and praying restitution.

It has been stated, and urged as a ground against the later pretensions of the Hudson's Bay Company, that at this time they were willing to contract their limits. While willing to do this for the purpose of effecting a settlement, it was only on condition of their not being able to obtain "the whole Straits and Bay which of right belongs to them."

"This," remarked a counsel for the Company in a later day, "is like a man who has a suit of ejectment, who, in order to avoid the expense and trouble of a law suit, says, 'I will be willing to allow you certain bounds, but if you do not accept that I will insist on getting all my rights and all that I am entitled to.'"

The Company's propositions soon began to take a definite form.

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vulgarly called Checheawan, in the bottom of the said Bay, where they are surrounded by the French on every side, viz., by their settlements on the lakes and rivers from Canada to the northwards, towards Hudson's Bay, as also from Port Nelson (Old York Fort) to the southward; but beside this, the Company have, by the return of their ship this year, received certain intelligence that the French have made another settlement at a place called New Severn, 'twixt Port Nelson and Albany Fort, whereby they have hindered the Indians from coming to trade at the Company's factory, at the bottom of the Bay, so that the Company this year have not received above one-fifth part of the returns they usually had from thence, insomuch that the same doth not answer the expense of their expedition.

THE COMPANY'S CLAIMS AFTER THE TREATY OF RYSWICK.

[*To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations.*]

The limits which the Hudson's Bay Company conceive to be necessary as boundaries between the French and them in case of an exchange of places, and that the Company cannot obtain the whole Streights and Bay, which of right belongs to them, viz.:—

1. That the French be limited not to trade by wood-runners, or otherwise, nor build any House, Factory, or Fort, beyond the bounds of 53 degrees, or Albany River, vulgarly called Chechewan, to the northward, on the west or main coast.

2. That the French be likewise limited not to trade by wood-runners, or otherwise, nor build any House, Factory, or Fort, beyond Rupert's River, to the northward, on the east or main coast.

3. On the contrary, the English shall be obliged not to trade by wood-runners, or otherwise, nor build any House, Factory, or Fort, beyond the aforesaid latitude of 53 degrees, or Albany River, vulgarly called Chechewan, south-east towards Canada, on any land which belongs to the Hudson's Bay Company.

4. As also the English be likewise obliged not to trade by wood-runners, or otherwise, nor build any House, Factory, or Fort, beyond Rupert's River, to the south-east, towards Canada, on any land which belongs to the Hudson's Bay Company.

5. As likewise, that neither the French or English shall at any time hereafter extend their bounds contrary to the aforesaid limitations, nor instigate the natives to make war, or join with either, in any acts of hostility to the disturbance or detriment of the trade of either nation, which the French may very reasonably comply with, for that they by such limitations will have all the country south-eastward betwixt Albany Fort and Canada to themselves, which is not only the best and most fertile part, but also a much larger tract of land than can be supposed to be to the northward, and the Company deprived of that which was always their undoubted right.

And unless the Company can be secured according to these propositions, they think it will be impossible for them to continue long at York Fort (should they exchange with the French), nor will the trade answer their charge ; and therefore if your lordships cannot obtain these so reasonable propositions from the French, but that they insist to have the limits settled between [Albany and] York and Albany Fort, as in the latitude of 55 degrees or thereabouts, the Company can by no means agree thereto, for they by such an agreement will be the instruments of their own ruin, never to be retrieved.

By order of the General Court,

WM. POTTER, *Secretary.*

Confirmed by the General Court of the said Company, 10th July, 1700.

The adventurers were, they said, not indisposed to listen to reason. They proposed limits to be observed by the two nations in their trade and possessions in the Bay. But should the French be so foolish as to refuse their offer, then they would not be bound by that or any former concession, but would then, as they had always theretofore done, "insist upon the prior and undoubted right to the whole of the Bay and straits."

The Court of Versailles was now most anxious to delimit the boundaries of the respective possessions of the two countries in the Bay. To this end, proposals were exchanged between the two crown governments. One alternative proposed by the French Ambassador was that the Weemish River, which was exactly half way between Fort Bourbon and Fort Albany, should mark the respective limits of the French on the east, while the limits of New France on the side of Acadia should be restricted to the River St. George.

Lewis proposes boundaries.

This proposition having been referred to them, the Board of Trade and Plantations discouraged the scheme. The Hudson's Bay Adventurers it said, challenged an undoubted right to the whole Bay, antecedent to any pretence of the French. It was, therefore, requisite that they should be consulted before any concession of territories could be made to the Most Christian King or his subjects.

The Company pinned their hopes to an outbreak of hostilities,* which would enable them to attempt to regain

* The Company being by these and other misfortunes reduced to such a low and miserable condition, that, without his Majesty's favour and assistance, they are in no ways able to keep that little remainder they are yet possessed of in Hudson's Bay, but may justly fear in a short time to be deprived of all their trade in those parts which is solely negotiated by the manufacturers of this kingdom. Upon the whole matter, the Company humbly conceive, they can be no ways safe from the insults and encroachments of the French, so long as they are suffered to remain possessed of any place in Hudson's Bay, and that in order to dislodge them from thence (which the Company are no ways able to do) a force of three men-of-war, one bomb-vessel, and two hundred and fifty soldiers besides the ships' company will be necessary, whereby that vast tract of land which is of so great concern, not only to this Company in particular, but likewise to the whole nation in general, may not be utterly lost to this kingdom.

what they had lost. A protracted peace was hardly looked for by the nation. In answer to Governor Knight's continual complaints, to which were added those of the dispossessed Geyer, the Company begged its servants to bide their time; and to exert themselves to the utmost to increase the trade at Albany, and Moose, and Rupert's River.

"England," says the historian Green, "was still clinging desperately to the hope of peace, when Lewis, by a sudden act, forced it into war. He had acknowledged William as King in the Peace of Ryswick, and pledged himself to oppose all the attacks on his throne. He now entered the bed-chamber at St. Germain, where James was breathing his last, and promised to acknowledge his son at his death as King of England, Scotland and Ireland."

Such a promise was tantamount to a declaration of war, and in a moment England sprang to arms. None were so eager for the approaching strife as the Honourable Merchants-Adventurers. They expressed their opinion that, while their interests had undoubtedly suffered at the peace of 1697, they were far from attributing it to any want of care on the part of his Majesty. Their rights and claims, they said, were then "overweighed by matters of higher consequence depending in that juncture for the glory and honour of the King."

Outbreak of the war between England and France.

Yet a dozen more years were to elapse before they were to come into their own again; and during that critical period much was to happen to affect their whole internal economy. The value of the shares fell; the original Adventurers were all since deceased, and many of their heirs had disposed of their interests. A new set of shareholders appeared on the scene; not simultaneously, but one by one, until almost the entire personnel of the Company had yielded place to a new, by no means of the same weight or calibre.*

Mention has already been made of the manner in which the Company devoted its thought and energy to its weekly

* The Duke of York's (James II.) share, however, was retained by his heirs up to 1746.

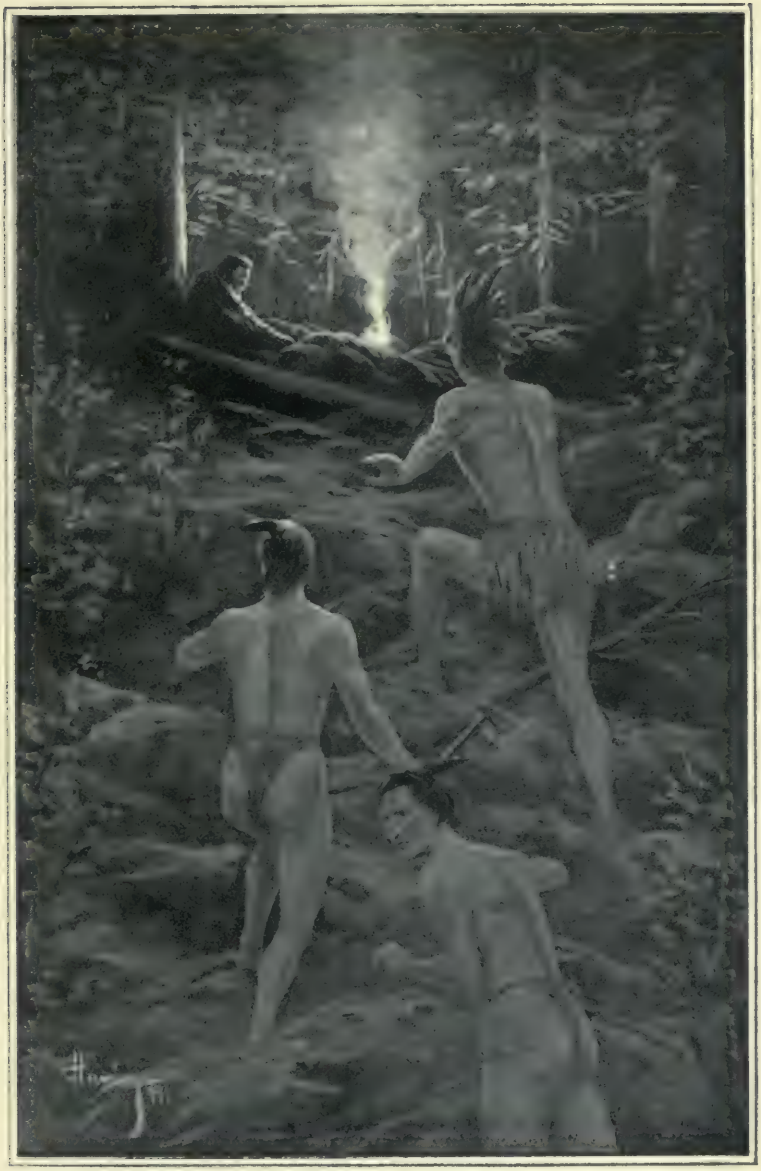
meetings. Not even in the gravest crises to which the East India Company was subjected, was there a statute more inconvenient or severe, than the following: "Resolved and ordered by the Committee, to prevent the Company's business from being delayed or neglected, that for the future if any member do not appear by one hour after the time mentioned in the summons and the glass run out, or shall depart without leave of the Committee, such member shall have no part in in the moneys to be divided by the Committee, and that the time aforesaid be determined by the going of the clock in the Court-room, which the Secretary is to set as he can to the Exchange clock; and that no leave shall be given until one hour after the glass is run out."

But out of their adversity sprung a proposition which, although not put into effect upon a large scale until many years afterwards, yet well deserves to be recorded here. To stem the tide of desertions from the Company's service, caused by the war, and the low rate of wages, it was in 1710 first suggested that youthful Scotchmen be employed.*

Employment of Scotchmen in the service.

The scarcity of servants seems to have continued. In the following year greater bribes were resorted to. "Captain Mounslow was now ordered to provide fifteen or sixteen young able men to go to H. B. This expedition for five years, which he may promise to have wages, viz.: £8 the 1st year; £10 the 2nd; £12 the 3rd and £14 for the two last years, and to be advanced £3 each before they depart from Gravesend." The result of this was that in June, 1711, the first batch of these servants came aboard the Company's ship at Stromness. But they were not destined to sail away to the Bay in their full numbers. Overhauled by one of Her Majesty's ships, eleven of the young men were impressed into the service. For many years after this incident it was not found easy to engage servants in the Orkneys.

* Captain John Merry is desired to speak with Captain Moody, who has a nephew in the Orkneys, to write to him to provide fifteen or sixteen young men, about twenty years old, to be entertained by the Company, to serve them for four years in Hudson's Bay, at the rate of £6 per annum, the wages formerly given by the Company.—From the Company's Order Book, 29th February, 1710.



"The younger men now stole again to the French camp and massacred all the others in their sleep."

(See page 185.)

PEABODY MUSEUM
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA

OF CALIF

Captain Barlow was governor at Albany Fort in 1704 when the French came overland from Canada to besiege it. The Canadians and their Indian guides lurked in the neighbourhood of Albany for several days before they made the attack, and killed many of the cattle that were grazing in the marshes. A faithful Home Indian (as those Crees in the vicinity were always termed), who was on a hunting excursion, discovered those strangers, and correctly supposing them to be enemies, immediately returned to the fort and informed the governor of the circumstance. Barlow, while giving little credit to the report, yet took immediately every measure for the fort's defence. Orders were given to the master of a sloop hard by to hasten to the fort should he hear a gun fired.

In the middle of the night the French came before the fort, marched up to the gate and demanded entrance. Barlow, who was on watch, told them that the governor was asleep, but he would go for the keys at once. The French, according to the governor, on hearing this, and expecting no resistance, flocked up to the gate as close as they could stand. Barlow took advantage of this opportunity, and instead of opening the gate opened two port-holes, and discharged the contents of two six-pounders into the gathering. This quantity of grape-shot slaughtered great numbers of the French, and amongst them their commander, who was an Irishman.

A precipitate retreat followed such an unexpected reception; and the master of the sloop hearing the firing proceeded with the greatest haste to the spot. But some of the enemy, who lay in ambush on the river's bank, intercepted and killed him, with his entire crew.

Seeing no chance of surprising the fort, the French retired reluctantly, and did not renew the attack; although some of them were heard shooting in the neighbourhood for ten days after their repulse. One man in particular was noticed to walk up and down the platform leading from the gate of the fort to the launch for a whole day. At sundown Fullerton, the governor, thinking his conduct extraordinary, ventured out and spoke to the man in French. He offered him lodgings within the fort if he chose to accept them; but to

such and similar proposals the man made no reply, shaking his head. Fullerton then informed him that unless he would surrender himself as his prisoner he would have no alternative but to shoot him. In response to this the man advanced nearer the fort. The governor kept his word, and the unhappy Frenchman fell, pierced by a bullet. No explanation of his eccentric behaviour was ever forthcoming, but it may be that the hardships he expected to encounter on his return to Canada had unbalanced his mind, and made him prefer death to these while scorning surrender.

It was some solace to know that their French rivals were in trouble, and that York Factory had hardly proved as great a source of profit to the French Company as had been anticipated. The achievements of Iberville and his brothers had done little, as has been shown, to permanently better its fortunes. To such an extent had these declined, that the capture, in 1704, of the principal ship of the French Company by an English frigate, forced these traders to invoke the assistance of the Mother Country in providing them with facilities for the relief of the forts and the transportation of the furs to France. In the following year, the garrison at Fort Bourbon nearly perished for lack of provisions. The assistance was given; but two years later it was discontinued, because they could no longer spare either ships or men. Although both were urgently needed for defence against the New Englanders. Owing to the enormous increase of unlicensed bushrangers, the continued hostilities and the unsettled state of the country, no small proportion of the entire population chose rather to adventure the perils of illicit trade in the wilderness, than to serve the king in the wars at home.* Unaccustomed for so long a period to till the soil, their submission was not easily secured, no matter how dire the penalties.

Desperate condition of the French at Fort York.

Finding their continual petitions to the Lords of Trade ineffectual, the Company now drew up a more strongly

* "This country," it was remarked in 1710, "is composed of persons of various character and different inclinations. One and the other ought to be managed, and can contribute to render it flourishing."

worded one and presented it to Queen Anne herself. The memorial differed from any other, inasmuch as the Company now lay stress for the first time on some other feature of their commerce than furs.

"The said country doth abound with several other commodities (of which your petitioners have not been able to begin a trade, by reason of the interruptions they have met with from the French) as of whale-bone, whale-oil (of which last your subjects now purchase from Holland and Germany to the value of £26,000 per annum, which may be had in your own dominions), besides many other valuable commodities, which in time may be discovered."

If the French, it was argued, came to be entirely possessed of Hudson's Bay, they would undoubtedly give up whale fishing in those parts, which will greatly tend to the increase of their navigation and to their breed of seamen.

When your Majesty, in your high wisdom, shall think fit to give peace to those enemies whom your victorious arms have so reduced and humbled, and when your Majesty shall judge it for your people's good to enter into a treaty of peace with the French King, your petitioners pray that the said Prince be obliged by such treaty, to renounce all right and pretensions to the Bay and Streights of Hudson, to quit and surrender all posts and settlements erected by the French, or which are now in their possession, as likewise not to sail any ships or vessels within the limits of the Company's charter, and to make restitution of the £108,514, 19s. 8d., of which they robbed and despoiled your petitioners in times of perfect amity between the two Kingdoms.

This petition seems actually to have come into the hands of the Queen and to have engaged her sympathy, for which the Honourable Adventurers had to thank John Robinson, the Lord Bishop of London. This dignitary, *persona grata* in the highest degree to the sovereign, was also a close personal friend of the Lake family, whose fortunes* were long bound up with the Hudson's Bay Company. The Company was asked to state what terms it desired to make. In great joy they acceded to the request.

* I find the following in the minute books, under date of 24th March, 1714. "It was resolved that the Committee when they meet Friday come Senuit, do agree to wait on the Lord Bishop of London, in order to return him the thanks of this Company for the care that has been taken of them by the Treaty of Ryswick."

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF TRADES AND PLANTATIONS.

The Memorandum of the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay:

That for avoiding all disputes and differences that may, in time to come, arise between the said Company and the French, settled in Canada, they humbly represent and conceive it necessary—

That no wood-runners, either French or Indians, or any other person whatsoever, be permitted to travel, or seek for trade, beyond the limits hereinafter mentioned.

That the said limits began from the island called Grimington's Island, or Cape Perdrix, in the latitude of 58½° north, which they desire may be the boundary between the English and the French, on the coast of Labrador, towards Rupert's Land, on the east main, and Novia Britannia on the French side, and that no French ship, bark, boat or vessel whatsoever, shall pass to the northward of Cape Perdrix or Grimington's Island, towards or into the Streights or Bay of Hudson, on any pretence whatever.

That a line be supposed to pass to the south-westward of the said Island of Grimington or Cape Perdrix to the great Lake Miscosinke, *alias* Mistoveny, dividing the same into two parts (as in the map now delivered), and that the French, nor any others employed by them, shall come to the north or north-westward of the said lake, or supposed line, by land or water, or through any rivers, lakes or countries, to trade, or erect any forts or settlements whatsoever; and the English, on the contrary, not to pass the said supposed line either to the southward or eastward.

Demand of the Company.

That the French be likewise obliged to quit, surrender and deliver up to the English, upon demand, York Fort (by them called Bourbon), undemolished; together with all forts, factories, settlements and buildings whatsoever, taken from the English, or since erected or built by the French, with all the artillery and ammunition, in the condition they are now in; together with all other places they are possessed of within the limits aforesaid, or within the Bay and Streights of Hudson.

These limits being first settled and adjusted, the Company are willing to refer their losses and damages formerly sustained by the French in time of peace, to the consideration of commissioners to be appointed for that purpose.

By order of the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England, trading into Hudson's Bay.

Hudson's Bay House, 7th of February, 1711–12.

A List of Forts from 1668 to 1714.

1. Rupert, called by the French St. Jacques. Founded 1668 by Gillam. Taken by the French under Troyes and Iberville, July, 1686. Retaken by the English, 1693.

2. Fort Monsippi, Monsonis, St. Lewis and Moose Fort, taken by Troyes and Iberville 20th June, 1686. Retaken 1693.

3. Fort Chechouan, St. Anne or Albany, taken by de Troyes and Iberville in 1686. Retaken 1693.

4. New Severn or Nieu Savanne, taken by Iberville, 1690.

5. Fort Bourbon, Nelson or York. Founded 1670. Taken by the French, 1682, acting for English, 1684. Retaken by Iberville 12th October, 1894. Retaken by the English 1696, and by the French, 1697. Retaken by the English, 1714.

6. Fort Churchill, 1688.

7. East Main.

CHAPTER XVII.

1712–1720.

Queen Anne Espouses the Cause of the Company—Prior's View of its Wants—Treaty of Utrecht—Joy of the Adventurers—Petition for Act of Cession—Not Pressed by the British Government—Governor Knight Authorized to take Possession of Port Nelson—"Smug Ancient Gentlemen"—Commissioners to Ascertain Rights—Their Meeting in Paris—Matters move slowly—Bladen and Pulteney return to England.

At last the Company had triumphed. Its rights had been admitted; the Queen and her ministers were convinced of the justice of its claims.* Peace, long and anxiously awaited, began to dawn over the troubled horizon. Lewis and his

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*THE LORDS OF TRADE TO THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Dartmouth.

MY LORD,—In obedience to Her Majesty's commands, signified to us, we have considered the enclosed petition from the Hudson's Bay Company to Her Majesty, and are humbly of opinion that the said Company have a good right and just title to the whole Bay and Streights of Hudson.

Answer of the Lords of Trade.

Since the receipt of which petition, the said Company have delivered us a memorial, relating to the settlement of boundaries between them and the French of Canada, a copy whereof is enclosed, and upon which we take leave to offer, that as it will be for the advantage of the said Company that their boundaries be settled, it will also be necessary that the boundaries between Her Majesty's colonies on the continent of America and the said French of Canada be likewise agreed and settled; wherefore we humbly offer these matters may be recommended to Her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries at Utrecht.

We are,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient, and most humble servants,

WINCHELSEA,	GEO. BAILLIE,
PH. MEADOWS,	ARTH. MOORE,
CHAS. TURNER,	FRA. GWYN.

Whitehall, February 19th, 1711–12.

courtiers had long sickened of the war: and at the Flemish town of Utrecht negotiations were on foot for a cessation of hostilities and the adjustment of differences between the crowns of England and France.

The view which Matthew Prior, the English plenipotentiary, took of the Company's rights was not one, however, inspired by that body. He wanted the trade of the country, rather than the sovereignty.

"I take leave to add to your lordship," he observes at the end of a communication addressed to the Secretary of State, "that these limitations are not otherwise advantageous or prejudicial to Great Britain than as we are both better or worse with the native Indians; and that the whole is a matter rather of industry than of dominion."

These negotiations finally resulted in a treaty signed on the 31st of March (O.S.), 1713, by which the whole of Hudson's Bay was ceded to Great Britain without any distinct definition of boundaries, for the determining of which commissioners were to be appointed.

Effect of the Treaty on the Company.

On the news of the conclusion of the Treaty, the Adventurers were filled with joy. The Committee was in session when a messenger came hot haste from Whitehall to bear the glad tidings. A General Court was convoked for several days later. Plans were concerted for securing the very most that the circumstances would allow. It was necessary to secure the Act of Cession which it was supposed would be issued by Lewis, ceding to Great Britain the places on Hudson's Bay, the Company being regarded merely in the light of sub-ordinary subjects. Many of the members wished to press at once for pecuniary compensation, but the wiser heads agreed that this would best be a matter for subsequent negotiation. Many thought indeed that perhaps there need be no haste in the matter, as the interest on the original estimate of damages, already nearly double the principal, was growing daily at an enormous rate.

"As to the Company's losses," says a memorandum of this year, "it will appear by a true and exact estimate that the

French took from the Company in full peace between 1682 and 1688 seven ships, with their cargoes, and six forts and caches in which were carried away great stores of goods laid up for trading with the Indians. The whole amounts to £38,332 15s., and £62,210 18s. 9d. interest, computed to 1713."

Under date of 30th July, 1714, occurs the following: "The Committee having received a letter from the Lords Commissioners of Trade, and they desiring their attendance on Tuesday next, and to bring in writing the demands of the Co. for damages rec'd from the French in times of peace pursuant to the 10th & 11th Articles of the Treaty of Utrecht. Upon which the Secretary is ordered to Copy out the Abstract of the whole damage sustained, amounting to with Interest the sum of £100,543–13–9; as likewise the particulars in these small volumes in order to present the same to the Commission of Trade on Wednesday next."

Company's claim for compensation

It does not seem to have been doubted but that the Queen, if petitioned, would grant the Company's request in time to send an expedition to the Bay that very year.*

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*THE COMPANY'S PETITION TO QUEEN ANNE FOR ACT OF CESSION.

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty:—

The humble petition of the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, sheweth:

That your petitioners, being informed that the Act of Cession is come over, whereby (among other matters thereby concerted) the French King obliges himself to restore to your Majesty) or to whom your Majesty shall appoint to take possession thereof) the Bay and Streights of Hudson, as also all forts and edifices whatsoever, entire and demolished, together with guns, shot, powder and other warlike provisions (as mentioned in the 10th article of the present treaty of peace), within six months after the ratification thereof, or sooner, if possible it may be done.

Your petitioners do most humbly pray your Majesty will be graciously pleased to direct the said Act of Cession may be transmitted to your petitioners, as also your Majesty's commission to Captain James Knight and Mr. Henry Kelsey, gentleman, to authorize them, or either of them, to take possession of the premises above mentioned, and to constitute Captain James Knight to be Governor of the fortress called Fort Nelson,

But while vessels were being acquired, fitted out and loaded with cargoes, the Company was wise enough not to run the risk of falling into a trap. Nothing was to be done without the fullest royal authority.

It is worthy of remark as illustrating how much the Company trusted the Canadian authorities, Bolingbroke (May 29, 1713) reminded the Duke of Shrewsbury (then at Paris) that in Pontchartrain's letter to the Marquis de Vaudreuil, Governor of Canada, the latter was directed to yield the forts and settlements belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company: "But this order the Merchants thought would hardly fulfil their requirements. They were despatching two ships to the Bay. It would therefore be better if his grace obtained direct order to M. Jérémie in duplicate."

But the Act of Cession eagerly awaited by the Company was not forthcoming. The Queen's advisers were wiser than anybody else. Lord Dartmouth's letter* of the 27th May, 1713, enclosing the petition of the Hudson's Bay Company, shows what was the design in not accepting an Act of Cession from the French King. Her Majesty insisted only upon an order from the

No Act of Cession.

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and all other forts and edifices, lands, seas, rivers and places aforesaid; and the better to enable your petitioners to recover the same, they humbly pray your Majesty to give orders that they may have a small man-of-war to depart with their ships, by the 12th of June next ensuing, which ship may in all probability return in the month of October.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

By order of the Company.

per WM. POTTER, *Secretary.*

* "MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—The Queen has commanded me to transmit to you the enclosed petition of the Hudson's Bay Company, that you may consider of it and report your opinion what orders may properly be given upon the several particulars mentioned. In the meantime I am to acquaint you that the places and countries therein named, belonging of right to British subjects, Her Majesty did not think fit to receive any Act of Cession from the French King, and has therefore insisted only upon an order from that Court for delivering possession to such persons as should be authorized by Her Majesty to take it; by this means the title of the Company is acknowledged, and they will come into the immediate enjoyment of their property without further trouble."

French Court for delivering possession; "by which means the title of the Company was acknowledged, and they will come into the immediate enjoyment of their property without further trouble."

The summer of 1713 came on apace, and it was soon too late to think of occupying Port Nelson that year. But all was made ready for the next. On the 5th of June, 1714, many of the Adventurers hied themselves to Gravesend, to wish Governor Knight and his deputy, Henry Kelsey, godspeed. "The Committee," we read in the minutes, "delivered to Captain Knight, Her Majesty's Royal Commission, to take possession (for the Company) of York Fort, and all other places within the Bay and Straits of Hudson. Also another Commission from Her Majesty constituting him Governor under the Company, and Mr. H. Kelsey, Deputy Governor of the Bay and Straits of Hudson, aforesaid."

Knight took with him, likewise, "the French King's order under his hand and seal, to Mons. Jérémie, Commander at York Fort, to deliver the same to whom Her Majesty should appoint, pursuant to the Treaty of Utrick."

Knight's eyes, now dimmed with age, were gladdened by the sight of Port Nelson, on the 25th of July. Jérémie was already advised by the French ship, and no time was lost in evacuation. A bargain was made for such buildings and effects as the French had no further use for, which had been beforehand arranged. "From his particular regard for the Queen of Great Britain, the King will leave to her the artillery and ammunition in the forts and places in Hudson's Bay and Straits, notwithstanding the urgent reasons His Majesty has to withdraw them, and to appropriate them elsewhere." The cannon were accordingly left.

Regulation of boundary.

By Article X of the Treaty of Utrecht it was proposed, in order to avoid all further conflict and misunderstanding, that commissioners should be appointed to regulate the boundaries of Hudson's Bay and the extent of the trade thereof, which should be enjoyed

by each.* But no great haste was apparent on the part of France to secure this end. For several years nothing was done in the matter, save and except the persistent exchange of letters between the two ambassadors. There is a letter of Bolingbroke's which evinces the feeling current in diplomatic circles at the time.

"There is nothing more persistent in the world," he says, "than these claims of the Hudson's Bay Company. We are desirous greatly to see all these smug ancient gentlemen satisfied; but notwithstanding we are unable to budge an inch. The truth of the business seems to me to be that the French are always hoping that their ultimate concessions will be less and the English that these concessions will be vastly more. As for ourselves we have no desire to play with frost; and I for one shall be relieved to see this question thawed out without further delay."

Lewis had consented, at the time of the Peace, to afterwards name two commissioners who should give possession to such of the English, as proved that they were actual proprietors, or the heirs of proprietors of those who had in a former time possessed property in the Bay. This seemed to provide for the Company's rights in a manner most satisfactory.

Nevertheless matters dragged on, and it was not until 1719 that a practical movement was made. On the 3rd of September of that year, Daniel Pulteney and Martin Bladen, Lords of Trade, were appointed Commissioners in response to the appointment by Lewis of the Mareschal Comte d'Estrees and the Abbé Dubois, Minister and Secretary of State. Pulteney was an Indian merchant, and Bladen had been an officer in the army.

Appointment of a Commission.

* In 1714 the Hudson's Bay Company sent a memorandum to the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, accompanied by a map in which they claimed that the eastern boundary should be a line running from Grimington's Island through Lake Miscosinke or Mistassinnie, and from the said lake by a line run south-westward into 49 degrees north latitude, as by the red line may more particularly appear, and that that latitude be the limit; that the French do not come to the north of it, nor the English to the south of it.

The Lords of Trade having made the suggestion, the Company now wished their Governor, Sir Bibye Lake, to go over to Paris the "more earnestly to solicit and prosecute the claims of the Honourable Adventurers."

"It is by this Committee desired most humbly of the Governor to accept and undertake this journey and to manage the Company's affairs there, as he shall judge most conducive to their interest and advantage. Which, being signified to the Governor, he did, to the great satisfaction of the Committee readily undertake and accept the same. It was ordered that the Governor have liberty to take with him such person or persons to France as he shall think fit."

Lake accordingly joined Bladen and Pulteney, and was permitted to take a silent part in the conference.

It was intended that this Commission, meeting in Paris, should have power to settle generally the boundaries between the English and French possessions in America. But this was soon seen to be impracticable. The settlement of these matters was too vast and complicated for the Commission to deal with; and the Lords of Trade instructed Bladen, on his setting out, to deal only with the Hudson's Bay territories. It is significant that private instructions of a similar nature were at the same time conveyed to the French Commissioners by the Court.

The Commissioners finally met. Perhaps it would be a pity if Bladen's own quaint account of what followed were allowed to perish:—

On Saturday last, my Lord Stair and I met Marechal d'Estrees and Abbé Dubois. Our time was spent in preparatory discourses concerning the intent of the 10th article of the Treaty of Utrecht, relating to the boundaries of Hudson's Bay; and at our next meeting, which will be to-morrow at my Lord Stair's House, we design to give in the claim of the Hudson's Bay Company, in writing, with some few additions pretty material for their service, in case the Abbé Dubois his health will allow him to be there, which I fear it will not, for he is confined at present to his bed.

But I confess, I cannot help thinking it will be to a very little purpose to puzzle ourselves about setting boundaries, by treaty, in the North of America, if the French have so concise a way of fixing theirs in the south, without asking our concurrence; it is to be hoped they will have the modesty to recede from this new acquisition, but in the meantime I cannot help saying this gives me no very good relish either of their friendship or discretion.

Martin Bladen's description of the Commission.

I cannot leave this subject without observing how much it imports us to be upon our guard in our American Colonies. It were to be wished that the several Governments of His Majesty's plantations would pay the respect they owe to their instructions, and if those of Barbados for some time past had observed theirs, relating to Santa Lucia, the settlement of a hundred French families there could never have been put upon us at this day as a proof of their right to that island.

There is, further, much talk of a "multiplicity of books and papers necessary to be read," and of "arduous labours" in going over maps, charts and memoirs, which, however numerous, "are not to be depended on."*

While this initial work was going on, one of the adventurers was entreating his fellows at a Company meeting in London, to take note of a scheme which the French had been insidiously attempting for the previous four years to utterly destroy not only the Company's trade, but all the English colonies as well. He proceeded to read a private letter from a relation in the colony of Pennsylvania in which it was shewn that the Mississippi Company required close watching.

"Its leaders are egged on by the Jesuits, and will stop at no bloody measures to draw down trade from the Indians. Their projects must inevitably succeed if we are not watchful."

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*Mr. Bladen to Mr. Delefaye.

Paris, November 11th, 1719, N. S.

On Wednesday last, my Lord Stair and I delivered to the Marechal d'Estrees the demand of the Hudson's Bay Company, with respect to their limits, and by comparing the enclosed, which is a copy of that demand, with the instruction upon his head, you will perceive the same has been fully complied with.

So soon as I shall have the French Commissary's answer to our demand, I shall likewise take care to transmit you a copy of it, to be laid before their Excellencys the Lord Justices.

This was put forward as one potent reason why the French were complaisant about yielding us the Bay itself. It was but the shell they would surrender, whilst preserving to themselves the kernel.

This letter from the Pennsylvanian had its effect upon the easily-alarmed adventurers, for they lost no time in communicating their apprehensions to the Lords of Trade.

The matter was sent forward to Bladen and Pulteney. "It were heartily to be wished," the Company observed, "that in imitation of our industrious neighbours the French, some means can be determined upon to extend the trade in furs southwards."

In response, Bladen imparted a brilliant idea. He suggested that St. Augustine might be "reduced at a small cost," and advantage taken thereby of the war then in progress with Spain.

Matters went on in Paris as badly as could be. The English commissioners lost all patience. Nothing was in the air but John Law and his Mississippi scheme. The three distinguished Englishmen, Bladen, Pulteney and Lake, were dined and feted: but were at length disgusted with the whole business.* The "smug ancient gentlemen," as Bolingbroke had

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* PARIS, May the 4th, N.S., 1720.

MR. PULTENEY TO MR. SECRETARY CRAGGS.

My Lord Stair has spoke to the Regent, who said immediately that the conferences shall be renewed whenever we please; His Excellency then desired His Royal Highness would appoint a day, which he promised to do. This is what the Regent has promised my Lord Stair once every week, for four or five months past, without any effect, and his Excellency does not expect any more from the promise now, though possibly a conference may be appointed for form sake. I have been here near six months, and have seen only one conference, which was appointed by my Lord Stanhope's desire. I think there had been two conferences before I came; at the first of them the commissions were read, and at the second my Lord Stair and Mr. Bladen gave in a memorial about the limits of the Hudson's Bay Company, to which no answer has been made, I must own that I never could expect much success from this commission, since the French interests and ours are so directly opposite, and our respective pretensions interfere so much with each on the several points we were to

irreverently dubbed the Honourable Adventurers, were not to be satisfied in regard to the delimitation of boundaries and at this time. But perhaps even they had less interest in Hudson's Bay at heart than new interests which had dramatically arisen much nearer home.

Governor Lake was sent for suddenly from London, and Bladen and Pulteney were not long in following him.

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treat about; but that the French have not been willing to entertain us now and then with a conference, and try how far we might be disposed to comply with a conference, and try how far we might be disposed with any of the views they had in desiring the commission, cannot, I should think be accounted for, but by supposing they knew we came prepared to reject all their demands, and to make very considerable ones for ourselves. . . . I shall expect your further direction as to my stay or return; I cannot help owning I heartily wish for the latter, but I shall always submit to what His Majesty likes best, and shall only desire in this case that I may have a supply from the treasury, since I have not had the good fortune to be concerned in either of the Misiseppis.



CHAPTER XVIII.

1719-1727.

The South Sea Bubble—Nation Catches the Fever of Speculation—Strong Temptation for the Company—Pricking of the Bubble—Narrow Escape of the Adventurers—Knight and his Expedition—Anxiety as to their Fate—Certainty of their Loss—Burnet's Scheme to Cripple the French—It Forces them Westward into Rupert's Land.

The cause of the Governor's recall lay in the existence of a crisis which promised a happy issue. It arose through the venality of some of the Company's directors, who were victims of the South Sea fever.

South Sea Company.

The South Sea Company, whose extraordinary success gave rise to a thousand joint stock enterprises equally unsound and fatuous, owed its origin to Harley, Earl of Oxford, in 1711, who in return for the acceptance of a government debt of £10,000,000 granted to a number of merchants a monopoly of the trade to the South Seas.

At that time the most extravagant ideas prevailed concerning the riches of South America. "If," it was said, "the Hudson's Bay Company can make vast moneys out of the frozen North, what can be done with lands flowing with milk and honey?" The South Sea Adventurers carefully fostered all the current notions, spreading likewise the belief that Spain was ready to admit them to a share of its South American commerce.

In 1717 this Company advanced to the English Government five more millions sterling, at an interest of six per cent. Their shares rose daily. Even the outbreak of war with Spain, which destroyed all hope in the minds of sensible persons of any share in the Spanish traffic, did not lessen the Company's popularity. In Paris, John Law's Mississippi Bubble burst, ruining thousands, but, far from being alarmed at this catastrophe, it was universally believed that Law's

scheme was sound, but had been wrecked through unwise methods. In May, 1720, the South Sea Company proposed to take upon themselves the entire national debt of upwards of £30,000,000 upon a guarantee of five per cent. per annum for seven and one-half years, at the end of which period the debt might be redeemed if the Government chose, or the interest reduced to four per cent. The nation was dazzled; Parliament accepted the offer; and the Company's stock rose steadily to 330 on April 7, falling to 290 on the following day.

This day in April witnessed a change in methods on the part of the South Sea directors. Until then the scheme had been honestly promoted; but the prospect of enormous wealth was too near to be permitted to escape. It became thenceforward, until the crash, the prime object of the directors, at no matter what cost or scruple, to maintain the fictitious value of the shares. By May 28, £100 shares were quoted at 550; three days later they had reached 890. The whole nation caught the fever; the steadiest merchants turned gamblers. Hardly a day passed without a new swindling concern being started as a joint stock company.

A fever of speculation.

Meanwhile several of the Hudson's Bay Merchants-Adventurers looked on with envious eyes. The desire was great to embark in so tempting a scheme, and the opportunity to cast inflated shares on the market almost too great to withstand.

But for many weeks the temptation was resisted. At last, at a meeting early in August, the chief director came before a general court of the Adventurers with a scheme by which each partner could either retire with a moderate fortune or remain an active participant, and reap the benefit of an infusion of public capital.

The scheme was simplicity itself, to modern notions; but that it was not so regarded by some of the Adventurers themselves may be gathered from the following passage from a letter of Mrs. Mary Butterfield, one of the owners of the Company's stock.

"I cannot tell you how it is to be done, for that passes my wit; but in short, the value of our interests is to be trebled

without our paying a farthing ; and then to be trebled again if the business is to the publick taste, and we are told it cannot fail to be."

It was late in August before the scheme was detailed. It was explained that the Company's assets in quick and dead stock and lands were £94,500. With this as a basis, it was proposed to enlarge the stock to the sum of £378,000, dividing this into 3,780 shares of £100 each. Before this could be carried out, however, the existing stock, being but £31,500, or 315 shares, was to be made and reckoned 945 shares of £100 value each. By such means a result of £94,500 actual capital would appear. A majority of partners favoured the scheme, and the proposal was carried amidst the greatest enthusiasm. Its purpose was to unload the stock at an inflated figure, far even in excess of that actually named by its promoters. Had it succeeded and the flotation been carried out, it would have doubtless administered a death-blow to the Company as then organized, and would probably have involved the revocation of its charter in view of what was soon to occur. But the plan met with a sudden arrest by an event which then happened, and which in beggaring multitudes altered the whole disposition of the public with regard to joint stock enterprises.

Plan to reorganize the Company.

A general impression had gained ground that the South Sea Company's stock had attained high-water mark, and so many holders rushed to realize that the price fell, on June 3rd, to 640. The directors were not yet ready for their *coup*. Agents were despatched by them to buy up and support the market, and the result was that by nightfall of that day the quoted price was £750. By means of this and similarly unscrupulous devices, the shares were sent, early in August, to 1,000. This was the long-awaited opportunity. Many of the directors sold out ; a general anxiety began to prevail and the shares began to drop. In view of this change in affairs, the Hudson's Bay Company's meeting for September 3rd was deferred. On the 12th, South Sea shares were selling at 400, and the decline continued. The country

was thrown into the greatest excitement, and by the time December had arrived, Parliament had been hastily summoned to consider the calamity.

With what happened subsequently, to the authors and participators in this celebrated joint stock swindle, it is not my present purpose to deal, except to say that the Hudson's Bay Company was saved in the nick of time from sharing the fate of its neighbour and rival. A meeting on the 23rd of December was held, at which it was resolved that the "said subscription be vacated; and that the Company's seal be taken off from the said instrument."

Nevertheless one permanent result remained. The capital had been trebled, and it was now further resolved that each subscriber should have £30 of stock "for each £10 by him paid in." This trebled, the total capital stood, at the beginning of 1721, at £94,500.

The Company had had a narrow escape. To what extent its shares would have been inflated may be conjectured; but it is certain that it could not have avoided being swept into the vortex and sharing the same fate which overtook so many of its commercial contemporaries. Its enemies were on the watch, and they would have proved relentless. The revocation of its charter would have accomplished its final downfall. Already the Company was being assailed because it had not complied with one of the provisions named in that instrument: that of making search for a north-west passage.

It was not, however, to quiet these reproaches, so persistently levelled at it, that a year before the bursting of the South Sea Bubble an expedition was actually set on foot to accomplish the long-deferred exploration.

Knight, the Company's aged Governor at York Factory, had long listened to the tales of the Indians concerning the copper mines to the north; and resolved, on his return to England, to bring the matter before the Company. This he did, but it was by no means an easy matter to induce the Adventurers to consent to the expense of further exploration. Nevertheless Knight's insistence prevailed, more especially

as, besides the profitable results to be obtained through such a voyage, he was careful to point out that the Company were expected by their charter to undertake such an expedition.

Expedition to explore the north-west passage.

In 1719 the Company, therefore, fitted out two ships for the purpose of discovery north of Churchill. One of these, called the *Albany*, a frigate, was commanded by George Barlow, whom we have already seen as Deputy-Governor at Albany in 1704, when the French failed to capture that post. The other, named the *Discovery*, a sloop, under David Vaughan. But the command of the expedition itself was entrusted to Knight, who was a man of great experience in the Company's service, who had been for many years Governor of different Factories in the Bay, and who had made the first settlement at Churchill River.

Nevertheless, in spite of the experience Knight possessed of the Company's business, and its methods of trade with the Indians, there was nothing to lead any one to suppose him especially adapted for the present enterprise, having nothing to direct him but the slender and imperfect accounts which he, in common with many other of the Company's servants had received from the Indians, who, as we have seen, were at that time little known and less understood.

But these disadvantages, added to his advanced years, he being then nearly eighty, by no means deterred his bold spirit. Indeed, so confident was he of success and of the material advantages which would accrue from his impending discoveries, that he caused to be made, and carried with him, several large iron-bound chests, wherein to bestow the gold dust and other treasures which he "fondly flattered himself were to be found in those parts."

The first paragraph of the Company's instructions to Knight on this occasion was as follows :—

4th June, 1719.

To Captain James Knight.

Sir,—From the experience we have had of your abilities in the management of our affairs, we have, upon your application to us, fitted out the *Albany* frigate, Captain George Barlow, and the *Discovery*, Captain David Vaughan, Commander, upon a discovery to the northward ; and

to that end have given you power and authority to act and do all things relating to the said voyage, navigation of the said ship and sloop only excepted; and have given orders and instructions to our said Commanders for that purpose. You are, with the first opportunity of wind and weather, to depart from Gravesend on your intended voyage, and by God's permission to find out the Straits of Anian, and to discover gold and other valuable commodities to the northward.

Knight departed from Gravesend on board the *Albany*, and proceeded on his voyage. The ships not returning to England that year no uneasiness was felt, as it was judged they had wintered in the Bay. Besides, both were known to have on board a plentiful stock of provisions, a house in frame, together with the requisite tools and implements, and a large assortment of trading goods. Little anxiety was therefore entertained concerning their safety for fifteen months. But when New Year's Day, 1721, arrived, and neither ship nor sloop had been heard from, the Company became alarmed for their welfare.

By the ship sailing to Churchill in June they sent orders for a sloop then in the Bay, called the *Whalebone*, John Scroggs, master, to go in search of the missing explorers. But the *Whalebone* was cruising about in the north of the Bay at the time, on the Esquimaux trade, and returned to Churchill at so advanced a season of the year as to defer the execution of the Company's wishes until the following summer.

The north-west coast was little known in those days, so it is not singular that Scroggs, on board the little *Whalebone*, finding himself encompassed by dangerous shoals and rocks, should return to Prince of Wales' Fort little the wiser regarding the fate of the two ships. He saw amongst the Esquimaux, it is true, European clothing and articles, as in a later day Rae and McClintock found souvenirs of the Franklin tragedy; but these might have been come by in trade, or even as the result of an accident. None could affirm that a shipwreck or other total calamity had overtaken Knight and his companions.

Anxiety as to the fate of the expedition

Many years elapsed without anything to shed light on the fate of this expedition. At first, the strong belief which had

so long prevailed in Europe of a north-west passage by way of this Bay, caused many to conjecture that the explorers had found that passage and had gone through it into the South Sea. But before the voyages of Middleton, Ellis, Bean, Christopher and Jobington had weakened this belief it was known that Knight, Barlow and the crews of the two ships had been lost. Proofs of their fate were found in the year 1767, as will appear in a later chapter of this work.

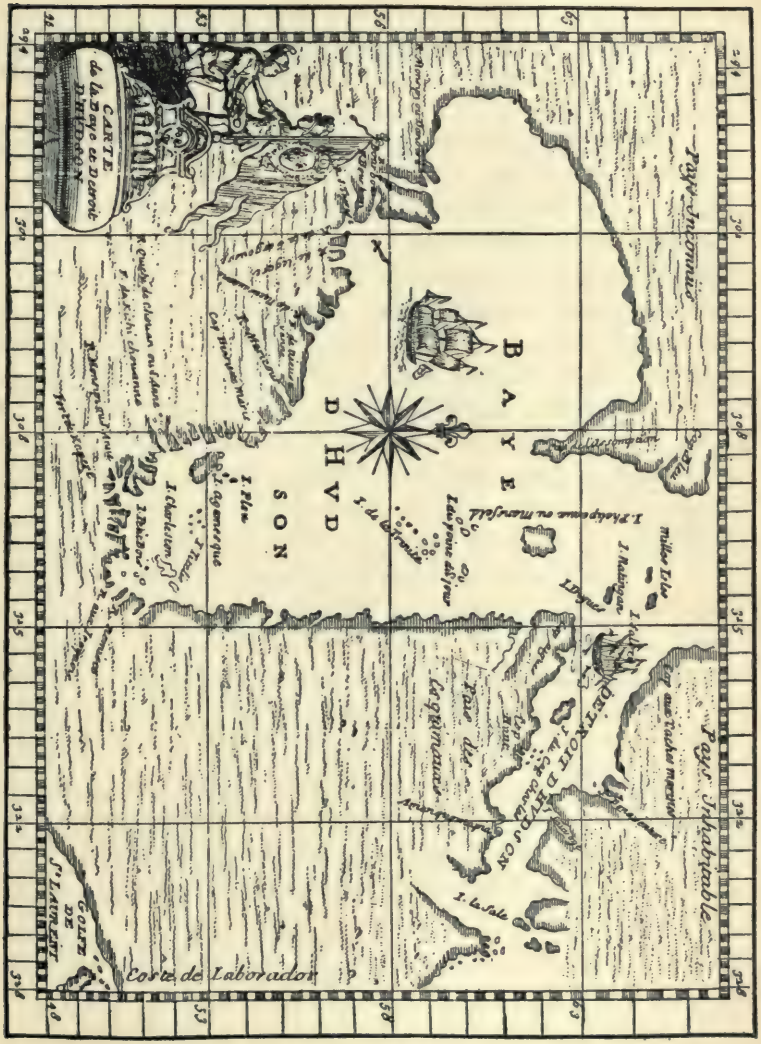
An important circumstance now transpired which was not without effect upon the Company's trade; and which, for a time, gave the Adventurers great uneasiness.

In 1727 Burnett had been appointed to the Governorship of New York. Finding that the French in Canada were in possession of all the Indian fur-trade of the north and west, which was not in the Hudson's Bay Company's hands, and that the New Englanders and Iroquois were trafficking with the Iroquois, he determined to take a bold step with a view to crippling the French.

It had long been understood that the chief support of New France was in the fur commerce; and upon enquiry it was found that the traders, of Quebec and Montreal, were chiefly supplied with European merchandise for barter from the New York merchants, from whom they procured it upon much easier terms than it could possibly be got from France. With this knowledge, the Governor resolved to foster the fur-trade of his colony by inducing direct transactions with the Indians. He procured an Act in the Assembly of the colony, prohibiting the trade in merchandise from New York. The colonial merchants were not, unnaturally, up in arms against such a measure; but Burnett, bent upon carrying his point, had their appeal to King George set aside and the Act confirmed by that monarch.

Attempt of New England to secure the fur-trade.

By this measure, trade at once sprang up with the Western Indians, since the French had no goods to offer them in any way to their liking at a reasonable price. Intercourse and familiarity ensued moreover in consequence; a fortified trad-



CONTEMPORARY FRENCH MAP OF THE BAY AND VICINITY.

ing post was built at Oswego, which not only drew away trade from the French, at Michilimackinac and St. Marie, but from Albany and Moose as well.

It has been observed that the ancient boundaries of Canada or New France were circumscribed by the Treaty of Utrecht, and that it is difficult to determine precisely the new boundaries assigned to it. The general interpretation adopted by the British geographers, as the country gradually became better known from that time up to the final cession of Canada, was that the boundary ran along the high lands separating the waters that discharged into the St. Lawrence from those that discharge into Hudson's Bay to the sources of the Nepigon River, and thence along the northerly division of the same range of high lands dividing the waters flowing direct to Hudson's Bay, from those flowing into Lake Winnipeg, and crossing the Nelson, or (as it was then known) the Bourbon River, about midway between the said Lake and Bay, thence passing to the west and north by the sources of Churchill River; no westerly boundary being anywhere assigned to Canada. This and other measures could have but one result: to make the French traders and the Government of New France perceive that their only hope to avert famine and bankruptcy lay in penetrating farther and farther into the west, in an effort to reach remote tribes, ignorant of true values and unspoilt by a fierce and ungenerous rivalry.

Boundaries between French and English territory.

It seems fitting to reserve the next chapter for a consideration of who and what the tribes were at this time inhabiting the territories granted by its charter to the Great Company; together with their numbers, their modes of life and relations with the factories.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

CHAPTER XIX.

1687–1712.

Hudson's Bay Tribes Peaceful—Effect of the Traders Presence—Depletion of Population—The Crees and Assiniboines—Their Habits and Customs—Their Numbers—No Subordination Amongst Them—Spirituous Liquors—Effect of Intemperance upon the Indian.

Let us imagine for a moment that the Hudson's Bay Company had held traffic with the fierce and implacable Iroquois, the Mohawks or the courageous and blood-thirsty tribes of the Mississippi, instead of with the Crees and Assiniboines. How different would have been its early history! What frail protection would have been afforded by the forts and wooden palisades, often not stronger than that last fort of the Jesuits in the Huron country, the inmates of which were slaughtered so ruthlessly, or that other at Niagara, where the Chevalier de Troyes and ninety of his companions perished to a man.

But the Red men of the Company's territories, compared to these, were pacific. Occasionally want or deep injustice drove them to acts of barbarism, as we have seen in the case of the massacre at York Factory under Jérémie's *régime;* but on the whole they had no marked enmity to the white men, and long displayed a remarkable and extremely welcome docility.

"The Assinibouels," remarked Jérémie, "are humane and affable; and so are also all those Indians with whom we have commerce in the Bay, never trading with the French but as their fathers and patrons. Although savages, they are foes to lying, which is extraordinary in nations which live without subordination or discipline. One cannot impute to them any vice, unless they are a little too slanderous. They never blaspheme and have not even a term in their language which defines an oath."

Character of the Assiniboines.

If we are to believe the early traders and explorers, the Red man of Rupert's Land spoke a tongue by no means



INDIAN TEPEE.

difficult for an Englishman to master. Yet if these same traders really took the trouble to master it, as they alleged, their knowledge certainly brought little order into the chaos of tribal nomenclature.

The custom of fantastic names for the Indians was long continued. More than one instance occur of the impropriety with which the French-Canadians named the Indians. They called one tribe Gros Ventres, or Big Bellies, and that without any known reason; they being as comely and well-made as any other tribe. "They are very far," says one trader, "from being remarkable for their corpulency." This tribe also came to be known as the Fall Indians.

Indian country.

Jérémie observed that the Ouinebigonnolinis inhabited the sea-coast. The Poaourinagou country was inhabited by the Miskogonhirines or Savannah, who made war with the Hakouchirmions. Twelve leagues above York Factory was situated the River Oujuragatchousibi, while far beyond dwelt the Nakonkirhirinons.

One might readily suspect one commandant of drawing upon his imagination when he speaks of such nations as the Unighkillyiakow, Ishisageck Roanu, the Twightwis Roanu, the Oskiakikis, Oyachtownuck Roanu, Kighetawkigh Roanu, and the Kirhawguagh Roanu.



An Assiniboine Indian.

In the seventeenth century, the districts about the Great Lakes were rather thickly populated. Certain regions which at the opening of the eighteenth century were but thinly sprinkled by inhabitants, once had boasted numerous tribes. For when the first missionaries visited the south of Lake Superior in 1668, they found the country full of inhabitants. They relate that, about this time, a band of Nepisingues, converts to the Jesuitical teaching, emigrated to the Nepigon country. By 1785 few of their descendants were said to exist, and not a trace amongst them of the religion espoused by their ancestors.

As to the Lake of the Woods district, before the smallpox, in 1781, ravaged this country and completed what the Nodwayes by their warfare had gone far to accomplish, this part of the country was very densely inhabited.

One of the Company's factors reported, in 1736, that a tribe lived beyond the range of mountains, who had never known the use of fire-arms, for which reason they were made slaves of by the Assiniboines and Crees. He declared he had beheld several of this tribe "who all wanted a

joynt of their little finger, which was cut off soon after birth."



INDIAN WITH TOMAHAWK.

"The Migichihilinons, that is the Eagle Ey'd Indians," reported Middleton, one of the Company's captains, "are at two hundred Leagues Distance; the Assinibouels inhabit the West and North; they are reputed to be the same Nation because of the great affinity of their language. The name signifies Men of the Rock. They use the Calumet and live at two hundred and fifty Leagues Distance. They paint their Bodies, are grave and have much Phlegm, like *Flemings*." He also enumerates the Michinipic Poets, or Men of Stone, of the Great Lake; but I am inclined to think these two are of the same tribe.

The Crees, or Christineaux, were the earliest as well as the most numerous tribe which had dealings with the Company.

The Crees.

They sprang from the same stock as the Ojibways, Chippewas or Saulteurs, who with the Assiniboines inhabited the vast interior of the country to the west of the Bay. Their language, according to one of the early traders, was less copious and expressive than their mother tongue. They were deficient in many direct terms for things, often expressing themselves in approximate phrases, whereas the Ojibways would have an exactly corresponding term ready at command. The Crees appear not to have possessed the custom of totems, so that it was often difficult for members of the

tribe to trace their ancestry back for more than two or three generations.

In their ideas of creation the Crees and the Saulteurs resembled, and the early traders and bushrangers learnt gradually that both nations owned a mythology of no mean proportions. Nain au Bouchaw, the God of the Saulteurs, was known as "Wee-sue-ha-jouch," amongst the Crees; but the tales they told concerning him were by no means clear and distinct, nor in such general currency. The Crees were divided into two groups: those inhabiting the plains, and the denizens of the woods; the latter being far the most enterprising and useful to the trade of the Company. The tents of the Crees, like those of the other tribes in Rupert's Land, were of dressed leather, erected by means of poles, seventeen of which latter were required for the purpose, two being tied together about three feet from the top. The whole formed nearly a circle which was then covered with buffalo, moose, or red deer skins, well sewn together, nicely cut to fit the conical figure of the poles. An opening was then arranged above to let out the smoke, and admit the light. Such tents were of good size, commonly measuring twenty feet in diameter. A fire was kindled in the centre, around which a range of stones was placed to keep the fire compact. The Crees were fond of self-adornment, and were much addicted to false hair. Their morals at first greatly shocked the servants of the Company, and in the early reports sent home from York Factory much stress was laid upon the need for enlightenment in this regard amongst the savages. Polygamy was common, but not universal. The first wife was considered as mistress of the tent, ruling all the others, often with a rod of iron, and obliging them to perform all the drudgery.

Their mode of living.

The names of the children were always given to them by their parents, or some near relative. Those of the boys were various, and generally derived from some place, season or animal. The names of the female children, amongst the northern Indians, were chiefly taken from some part or property of a marten, such as the White Marten, the Black

Marten, the Summer Marten, the Marten's Head, the Marten's Foot, the Marten's Heart, the Marten's Tail, etc.*

The exact number of Crees at the time of the Company's advent, is difficult to compute. Even at that time they were dispersed over a vast extent of country, mixing with the Assiniboines and other nations with whom they were on terms of peace. In 1709 appeared an estimate that there were not less than a million members of the Cree Nation. From what source was derived this striking conclusion is not given.

It may be laid down as a general rule that all contemporary estimates as to the population of the Indian tribes which were necessarily founded upon hearsay prior to actual penetration into their country are fanciful and totally unreliable. Perhaps the most significant fact which Parkman brought home to the masses of his readers, was the astounding discrepancy between current conception of the numbers of the various tribes, particularly the Iroquois, and that attested and corroborated by the acute research of scholars, and by the testimony of contemporaries. In 1749 the Company thought the number of the Crees to be about 100,000, men, women and children. A half century later they had diminished to about 14,000, although, in 1810, Henry can find only about 300 tents full of Crees capable of furnishing less than 1,000 men. In this calculation, however, he did not include the Crees who lived north of Beaver River. The Crees were, for the most part, quiet and inoffensive, and their personal appearance not entirely prepossessing; and although compared with the wilder and more valiant tribes to the south and east, their carriage and deportment was inferior, still they were gifted with activity, and prominent, wiry figures and intelligent countenances.

The Assiniboines.

The next numerous tribe was the Assiniboine, or Stone Indians, who it is believed originated with the Sioux or Nodwayes. But owing to some misunderstanding between the bands they separated,

* "Matonabbee," says Hearne, "had eight wives, and they were all called Martens."

and some half century before the first fort was built by the Company they were in possession of a vast extent of prairie country near the Red River, and thence running westward. The region they inhabited may be said to commence at the



ESQUIMAU WITH DOGS.

Hare Hills, near Red River, and running along the Assiniboine to the junction of the north and south branches of the Saskatchewan. They were generally of a moderate stature, slender and active. In complexion they were of a lighter copper colour than the Crees, with more regular features. Moreover they were readily distinguished from the latter by a different head-dress.

Other tribes trading with the Company were the Sioux, Blackfeet, Blood, Slave and Crow Indians. There were also the Esquimaux, with whom a traffic in the north was carried on chiefly for whalebone, ivory and oil.

"I have often," wrote Captain Coats, "thought this people of the lineage of the Chinese, in the many features I see in

them, their bloated flatt faces, little eyes, black hair, little hands and feet, and their listlessness in travelling. They are very fair, when free from grease, very submissive to their men, very tender to their children, and indefatigable in the gee-gaws to please their men and children."

They owned no manner of government or subordination. The father or head of the family obeyed no superior nor any command, and he himself only gave his advice or opinions. Consequently it was rarely that any great chief ever existed, and then only in time of war. It is true that when several families went to war, or to the factories to trade, they chose a leader, but to such a one obedience was only voluntary; everyone was at liberty to leave when he pleased, and the notion of a commander was soon obliterated.

Merit alone gave title to distinction; such merit as an experienced hunter could boast, or one who possessed knowledge of communication between lakes and rivers, who could make long harangues, was a conjurer, or had a large family. Such a man was sure to be followed by several Indians when they happened to be out in large parties. They likewise followed him down to trade at the settlements, although upon such occasions he was forced to secure their attendance by promises and rewards, as the regard paid to his ability was of too weak a nature to command subjection. In war a mutual resentment forced their union for perpetrating vengeance.

The Hudson's Bay Indian's method of dividing time was by numbering the nights elapsed or to come. Thus, if he were asked how long he had been on his journey, he would answer, "so many nights." From the nocturnal division he proceeded to lunar or monthly reckoning, twelve to a year, all of these moons being symbolical of some remarkable event or appearance.

Their method of computing numbers was abstruse, they reckoning chiefly by decades: two-tens, three-tens, ten-tens A few units over or under were added or subtracted, thirty-two being three-tens and two over. If they reckoned any large

number a skin or stick was laid down for every ten, and afterwards tied in a bundle for the aggregate.

The servants of the Company were not a little astonished at the wonderful intuition of the Indian, which enabled him to forego the advantage to be derived from a compass, and yet to rarely miss his way. The trees, he knew, were all bent to the south, and the branches on that side were larger and stronger than on the north, as was also the moss. To apprise his women of the spot where the game was killed, he broke off branches here and there, laying them in the path with their ends pointed in the requisite direction.

Intelligence of the Indians.

In winter, when the braves went abroad they rubbed themselves all over with bear's grease or beaver oil, treating in this fashion, too, the furs they wore.

"They use," says one trader, "no milk from the time they are weaned, and they all hate to taste Cheese, having taken up an opinion that it was made of Dead Men's Fat." They were fond of prunes and raisins, and would give a beaver skin for twelve of them to carry to their children, and also for a Jew's-harp or a tin trumpet. They were great admirers of pictures or prints, giving a beaver for bad prints, and "all toys were jewels to them."

A trader at a little later period writes: "Having been fortunate enough to administer medical relief to one of these Indians during their stay, I came to be considered as a physician, and found that was a character held in high veneration," and goes on to add that their solicitude and credulity as to drugs and nostrums had exposed them to gross deceptions on the part of the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company. One of the chiefs informed him that he had been at the Bay the year before and there purchased a quantity of medicines which he would allow his visitor to inspect. Accordingly, he fetched a bag containing numerous small papers, in which he found lumps of white sugar, grains of coffee, pepper, allspice, cloves, tea, nutmegs, ginger, and other things of the kind, sold as specifics against evil spirits and against the dangers of battle. These compounds were said to

give power over enemies, particularly the white bear, of which the Indians in those latitudes were much afraid; others were infallible against barrenness in women, against difficult labour, and against a variety of other afflictions.

Superstition of the Indians.

It is related that some Indians, who were employed in the vicinity of York Factory in a goose hunt, were so influenced by superstition that they firmly believed the devil, with hideous howlings, frequented their tent every night. They came in a most dejected state to the factory and related a lamentable tale to the Governor, setting forth with much pathos, the distress they were being subjected to by his Satanic majesty. So overcome were they that they kept large fires burning all night, sleeping only in the day time. One of the Red men declared that he had discharged his gun at the monster, but unluckily missed. The devil was described as of human shape, with a capacity for enormous strides. The governor treated the victims to a little brandy, and as if by magic their courage rose. Investigation that same night disclosed that the Satan was neither more nor less than a huge night-owl.

The same trader also declares he found a number of small prints, such as in England were commonly sold to children, but which amongst the Indians were each transformed into a talisman for the cure of some evil or for procuring some delight. He even gives the mottoes on some of these, and their specific uses: No. 1—"A sailor kissing his mistress on his return from sea." This worn about the person of a gallant attracted, though concealed, the affections of the sex!" No. 2—"A soldier in arms." Such a talisman poured a sentiment of valour into its possessor and gave him the strength of a giant!

It was alleged that by means of such commodities many customers were secured to the Company, nor is there reason to doubt it. "Even those Indians who shortened their voyage by dealing with us, sent forward one canoe laden with beaver-skins to purchase articles of this kind at Cumberland

House." Henry adds that he was wise enough not to dispute their value.

As time went on the Indians began to relinquish many of the habits and customs, and even the appearance they presented, before the advent of the white traders. Being in constant communication with the factories, they became semi-civilized, and took on many of the outer characteristics of the European. They brought in year after year the spoils of the chase in strict confidence, and there exchanged them for the necessaries of life, which they no longer provided for themselves. To all intents and purposes the tribes were in the pay of the Company, or lived upon their bounty. It was, therefore, to be expected that all originality would be lost amongst them.

The principal things necessary for the support and satisfaction of the Indian and his family in the middle of the eighteenth century were: a gun, hatchet, ice chisel, brazil fob, knives, files, flints, powder and shot, a powder horn, a bayonet, a kettle, cloth, beads, etc.

It was early found that alcohol was a very dangerous element to introduce amongst the savages. Talon had presented the unhappy colony of New France with a statute removing all the penalties and ordinances of which justice and the authorities had made use to repress the disorders caused by the too great quantity of liquor given to the Indians.

The inclination of the Indians for intoxication, it was pointed out to Colbert by an ecclesiastic who sought to alter the condition of affairs, is much stronger than that of the people of Europe. They have, urged he, greater weakness in resisting it. "If in a bourgade there be liquor freely accessible to the Indians, they usually all become intoxicated—old, young, great and small, women and children, so that there is hardly one left sober. If there were liquor sufficient to last two days, drunkenness invariably continued two days. If enough for a week, it would last a week; if for a month, it would last a month. This," said the good

priest, "is what we do not see in Europe—a whole city get drunk, nor see it continue in that state for weeks and months." It may readily be perceived that those who wish to strike a bargain favourable to themselves with the Indians, had only to resort to liquor, and by that means, without regard to their own salvation or that of the savages, could generally procure what they desired at a small expenditure.

Liking of the Indians for liquor.

An Indian, it was said early in the next century, would barter away all his furs, nay even leave himself without a rag to cover his nakedness, in exchange for that vile, unwholesome stuff called English brandy.

The Company in England having decided not to employ liquor in its traffic with the Indians, the temptation was strong upon Colbert and the French to resort to it. At one of its meetings, in 1685, the Company listened to a paper describing the methods in vogue by the French traders at the important post of Tadousac. At this fort or factory, for more than twenty years previously, it was the custom to allow an Indian a quart of wine; this fluid, although it boasted such a title, hardly merited it. It was composed of one part of brandy to five parts of water; a proportion which fluctuated, it is true, but chiefly in respect of more water. To this more or less fiery liquid was given at a little later date the name high wine; and high wine figured largely in the dealings of both French and English with the Indians for more than two centuries. If an Indian desired more than the regulation quart, he was put off until another time. The necessary moderation was thus secured, and the trade suffered no injury. Colbert expressed himself as afraid that if the Quebec Company did not employ liquor the Indians would carry their beavers to the Dutch. He need not, however, have troubled himself with this apprehension, as it was the Iroquois alone who could go there, and the French of Quebec did small trade with this hostile nation. It was asserted that the French would not lose five hundred skins a year by preserving the moderation necessary for Christianity, and the good morality of the colony.

Excess of liquor frequently made Europeans merry and gay; on the Indian, however, it had a contrary effect. Under its influence he recalled his departed friends and relations, lamenting their death with abundance of tears. Should he be near their graves he would often resort thither and weep there. Others would join the chorus in a song, even though quite unable to hold up their heads. It was not uncommon for them to roll about their tents in a fit of frenzy, frequently falling into the blazing fire. Quarrelling then was common: an ancient disagreement, long forgotten, being revived. The chiefs had often the prudence, when matters were going this way, to order the women to remove all offensive weapons out of the tent. But one weapon, very effective, the teeth, still remained; and it was not unusual to see several braves the next morning without a nose, an ear, or a finger. In affrays such as these, no respect whatever was paid to the ties of blood, brothers and sisters often fighting with great spirit and animosity. At the conclusion of one of these encounters early in the eighteenth century, an Indian entered York Factory one morning and desired to be admitted to the surgeon. He was conducted to the surgeon's room; he saluted its inmate in broken English, with "Look here, man; here my nose," at the same time holding out his palm, which contained half that desirable facial adjunct. This he desired the surgeon, having a mighty opinion of the faculty, to restore. The man's nephew had, it seems, bit it off; he declared he felt no pain, nor was he sensible of his loss till awaking the next morning he found the piece lying by his side.

Effect of intoxication on the Indians.



CHAPTER XX.

1685–1742.

Errant Tribes of the Bay—The Goose Hunt—Assemblage at Lake Winnipeg — Difficulties of the Voyage — Arrival at the Fort — Ceremony followed by Debauch—Gifts to the Chief—He makes a Speech to the Governor—Ceremony of the Pipe—Trading Begun.

The tribes to the west of the Bay led an erratic life. They were without horses, and it was their custom never to remain above a fortnight in one spot, unless they found plenty of game.

When they had encamped, and their lodges were built, they dispersed to hunt, meeting in the evening when they had procured enough to maintain them during the day. It was not their custom to travel more than three or four miles from their lodges, but when scarcity of game was encountered they would remove a league or two farther off. In this fashion they traversed the whole forest region, hardly missing a single day winter or summer, fair or foul, but always employed in some kind of chase.

The Indians as hunters.

The Indians were ruthless slaughterers of animals at the earliest period at which they were known to the servants of the Company. Whether they happened to be under the pinch of necessity of enjoying themselves in all the happiness of health and plenty, it was their custom to slay all they could. They boasted a maxim that the "more they killed, the more they had to kill." Such an opinion, although opposed to reason and common sense, was clung to with great pertinacity by them. The results of this indiscriminate slaughter were obvious; and to such a pitch of destitution were the tribes often brought that cannibalism was not infrequent amongst them.

The species of game, such as marten, squirrel and ermine, got by traps and snares, were generally caught by the

women and children. When the men had slain their elks, deer, or buffalo, or foxes, they left it where it fell, leaving the squaws to fetch it to the lodges the next day, taking care to cut off the titbits or tender morsels, such as tongues, for their own immediate pleasure.

A great part of the factory provisions consisted of geese killed by the Indians. For this purpose the factors supplied



MODERN TYPE OF INDIAN.

the latter with powder and shot, allowing them the value of a beaver skin for every ten geese killed. Accordingly, after the Indian had got his supply, he set off from his tent early in the morning into the marshes, where he sat himself down with great patience, difficult of imitation by the Company's men, and there, sheltered by willows, waited for the geese. These were shot flying, and so dexterous were the braves at

this sport that a good hunter would kill, in times of plenty, fifty or sixty a day. Few Europeans were able to endure the cold, hunger and adversity which often marked these excursions.

The nations coming from a distance to York Factory were wont to assemble in May at Lake Winnipeg to the number of perhaps fifteen hundred. The chief would then harangue the men, representing their wants, and exhort the young men to exert themselves to the utmost to reach the fort with all their skins and to secure good terms from the white men. Each family then made a feast, in the course of which they fixed upon those of their number who were to undertake the journey. During the progress of the wassail which then reigned, it was customary for speeches to be made, new alliances formed and old ones strengthened. The morrow was spent in building the birch bark canoes, in which the northern tribes had attained great proficiency; and being at last ready for the voyage, the leaders of the expedition were chosen, and all was ready to start.

Meeting at Lake Winnipeg.

It was never exactly ascertained how many actually participated in these trading expeditions; the number was regulated by the circumstance of the tribes being at peace or at war, and also whether disease raged amongst them. It may be taken, roughly speaking, that six hundred canoes containing one thousand persons, not counting women, came down annually to York Factory, with furs to trade.

No regularity marked their voyage, each striving to be foremost, because those proceeding first had the best chance of procuring food. During the voyage each leader canvassed, with all manner of art and diligence, for braves to join his party. Some were influenced by presents, and others by promises, for the more canoes each petty leader had under his command the greater he appeared at the factory.

Throughout their progress the Indians were obliged to go ashore for several hours daily, which caused great delay

in their progress. Their canoes were small, holding only two men and a pack of one hundred beaver skins, with not much room for provisions. Had their canoes been larger their voyages would undoubtedly have been less protracted, and they would have been able to transport a greater cargo. Often great numbers of skins were left behind.

Difficulties of the journey.

A good hunter of these nations could kill six hundred beavers in the course of a season ; he could carry down to the factory rarely more than one hundred, using the remainder at home in various ways. Sometimes he hung them upon branches of trees by way of votive offering upon the death of a child or near relation ; often they were utilized as bedding and bed coverings ; occasionally the fur was burnt off, and the beast roasted whole for food at banquets.

These annual journeys were beset by much hardship and suffering even at the best of times.

The testimony of at least one Governor is significant. "While," said he, "it is the duty of every one of the Company's servants to encourage a spirit of industry among the natives, and to use every means in their power to induce them to procure furs and other commodities for trade . . . . at the same time, it must be confessed that such conduct is by no means for the real benefit of the poor Indians ; it being well-known that those who have the least intercourse with the factories, are by far the happiest. . . . . It is true that there are few Indians but have once in their lives, at least, visited the fort, and the hardships and dangers which most of them experienced on those occasions have left such a lasting impression on their minds, that nothing can induce them to repeat their visits."

Arriving near their journey's end, they all put ashore ; the women going into the woods to gather pine-brush for the bottom of the tents, while the leaders smoked together and arranged the procession to the factory. This settled, they re-embarked, and soon after arrived before the post of the Company ; if there happened to be but one captain, his situa-

tion was in the centre of all the canoes; if more than one, they placed themselves at the wings, their canoes being distinguished by a small flag hoisted on a stick and placed astern. Arriving within two hundred yards of the palisade, they discharged their fowling pieces by way of compliment to the Governor, who returned the salute by firing off two or three small cannon. The men of the tribe seldom concerned



TYPE OF CREE INDIAN.

themselves with taking out the bundles, except occasionally when the younger ones assisted the women.

The factor being now informed that the Indians had arrived, the trader was sent to introduce the leaders into the fort. Chairs were placed in the trading-room for the visitors, and pipes introduced. During the first part of the

ceremony the leader puffed great clouds of smoke, but said little; but the tobacco in the bowl becoming low, he began to be more talkative. Fixing his eyes immovably on the ground, he informed the factors how many canoes he had brought, and what tribes he had seen; he enquired after the health of his hosts, and declared he is glad to see them. When this speech was concluded the Governor bade the chief and his party welcome, informing him that he had good goods and plenty, that he loved the Indians, and they might count upon his kindness to them. The pipe was then removed, and the conversation became general.

Arrival at the Fort.

During this visit the chief was dressed out at the Company's expense. He was furnished with a coarse cloth coat, red or blue, lined with baize, and white regimental cuffs; a waistcoat and breeches of baize. This suit was ornamented with orris lace. He was likewise presented with a white or checked cotton shirt, stockings of yarn, one red and the other blue, and tied below the knee with worsted garters; his moccasins were sometimes put on over these, but he as freely walked away in bare feet. His hat was of coarse felt and bedecked with three ostrich feathers, of various colours. A worsted sash was fastened to its crown; a small silk handkerchief drawn about his neck, and thus attired, the chief strutted up and down delighted.

His second in command also claimed attention. He was given a coat, but not a lined one; a shirt and a cap, such as was worn by sailors of the period. The guests once equipped, bread and prunes were forthcoming and set before the chief; and of these confections he took care to fill his pockets before they were carried out. These were followed by a two-gallon keg of brandy, pipes and tobacco for himself and followers.

It was now high time to think of returning to the camp, but this exit was not to be undertaken without further marks of the favour and esteem with which the chief was held by the Company. His conduct from the fort was effected in state. In front a halberd and ensign were borne; next came a drummer beating a march, followed by several of the factory

servants bearing bread, prunes, pipes, tobacco, brandy, etc. Behind these came the "King," "Captain," or chief, with stately tread, and erect, smoking his pipe and conversing with the factors at his side. Afterwards came the "Lieutenant," "Prince," relative or friend, who had accompanied the chief.

The tent was found ready for their reception, strewn with clean pine brush and beaver coats placed for them to sit. The brandy was deposited on the ground, and the chief gave orders for its distribution. After this the factor left, none too soon, however, for all were soon plunged into a brutal state of intoxication. "It is fifty to one," writes one trader, "but some one is killed before morning. They give loose rein to every species of disorderly tumult—all crying, fighting, and dancing."

About 1735, a party of Indians came down to trade, and the first day of their arrival, as was their invariable custom, got vilely drunk. While thus inebriated, they fought, not noisily, but silently, in the darkness. When morning dawned, two corpses, in a fearful state of mutilation, were found stretched on the ground in pools of blood.

After this debauch, which lasted about two or three days, the sobered braves took to the calumet of peace. The stem of this pipe was three or four feet long, decorated with pieces of lace, bears' claws, eagles' talons, and the feathers of the most beautiful birds. The pipe being affixed to the stem, the factor took it in both hands, and with great gravity rose from his chair and pointed the end of the stem to the east or sunrise, and then to the zenith, and to the west, and then perpendicularly to the Nadir. After this he took three or four hearty whiffs and then presented it to the chief, and so on round the whole party, the women excepted. When the tobacco was consumed, the factor took the pipe again and twirling it three times round his head, laid it with great deliberation on the table. A great Ho! was thereupon emitted from the mouths of the assemblage.*

Ceremony of the pipe.

* All this ceremony has a significance of its own. Interpreted, it said: "Whilst the sun shall visit the different parts of the world and make day and night; peace, firm friendship and brotherly love shall be established between the English and the Indians, and the same on the latter's part. By twirling the pipe over the head, it was further intended to imply that all persons of the two nations, whosoever they were, shall be included in the friendship and brotherhood, then concluded or renewed.

This ceremony being over, a further gratuity of bread and prunes was distributed, and the chief made a speech, which one trader has reported, after this style.

"You told me last year to bring many Indians to trade, which I promised to do. You see, I have not lied, here are many young men come with me; use them kindly, I say; let them trade good goods, I say. We lived hard last winter and



AN OLD CHIEF. *(From a Photograph.)*

were hungry; powder being short measure and bad, I say. Tell your servants to fill the measure, and not put their thumbs within the brim; take pity on us, take pity on us, I say.

"We paddle a long way to see you; we love the English. Let us trade good black tobacco, moist and hard twisted; let

us see it before it is opened. Take pity on us, take pity on us, I say.

"The guns are bad, let us trade light guns, small in the hand and well-shaped, and locks that will not freeze in the winter, and red gun-cases. Let the young men have more than measure of tobacco, cheap pattees, thick and high.

"Give us good measure of cloth; let us see the old measure. The young men love you by coming so far to see you. Give them good goods; they like to dress and be fine; do you see?"

As soon as the chief had finished the above speech, he, with his followers, proceeded to examine the guns and tobacco; the former with a most minute attention. This over, they traded with furs promiscuously, the leader being so far indulged as to be admitted into the trading-room all the time if he desired it.

The beaver thus received by the chief trader and stored at the factory pending its shipment to England in the Company's ships, was classified into eight varieties. The first was the fat winter beaver, slain in winter, which was valued at five shillings and sixpence a pound. The second sort was the fat summer beaver, worth two shillings and ninepence. Next came in order the dry winter beaver, and the Bordeaux, both worth three shillings and sixpence. The dry summer beaver, not much valued, about one shilling and ninepence. Sixth came the coat beaver, as it was called, which brought four shillings and sixpence. The Muscovite, dry beaver of a fine skin, covered with a silky hair; it was worn in Russia, where the short fur was combed away and manufactured into fabric, leaving only the hair; this fetched four and sixpence; and lastly on the list figured the Mittain beaver, which were utilized in the manufacture of mittens, being worth one shilling and ninepence.

Varieties of beaver.

It was reported that in the year 1742 the natives were so discouraged in their trade with the Company that many found the peltry hardly worth the carriage, and the finest furs sold for very little. When the tribes came to the

factory in June they found the goods much higher in price, and much in excess of the standard they were accustomed to. According to Joseph la France, a French-Canadian voyageur, they gave but a pound of gunpowder for four beavers, a fathom of tobacco for seven beavers, a pound of shot for one, an ell of coarse cloth for fifteen, a blanket for twelve, two fish-hooks or three flints for one, a gun for twenty-five, a pistol for ten ; a common hat with white lace cost seven beavers, an axe four, a bill-hook one, a gallon of brandy four, a chequered shirt seven ; "all of which sold at a monstrous profit, even to two thousand per cent."

It was a fact, nevertheless, that notwithstanding such discouragement the two expeditions of Indians who visited York and Churchill that year brought down two hundred packs of one hundred each, that is to say twenty thousand beaver skins. As to the other Indians who arrived from another direction, they carried three hundred packs of one hundred each, which made a total of fifty thousand beavers, besides nine thousand martens.



CHAPTER XXI.

1725–1742.

System of Licenses re-adopted by the French—Verandrye sets out for the Pacific—His son slain—Disappointments—He reaches the Rockies—Death of Verandrye—Forts in Rupert's Land—Peter the Great and the Hudson's Bay Company—Expeditions of Bering—A North-West Passage—Opposition of the Company to its Discovery—Dobbs and Middleton—Ludicrous distrust of the Explorer—An Anonymous Letter.

It has already been observed how fearful had grown the demoralization of the Indians, chiefly through the instrumentality and example of the *coureur des bois*. This class seemed daily to grow more corrupt, and bade fair to throw off the last vestige of restraint and become merged in all the iniquity, natural and acquired, of the savage races. We have seen, too, how the missionaries intervened, and implored the civil authorities to institute some sort of reform. It was at their solicitation that the Government of Canada at length decided to re-adopt the system of licenses, and to grant the privileges of exclusive trade to retired army officers, to each of whom they accorded a certain fur-bearing district by way of recompense for services rendered by him. In order that the trader might be protected against hostile assault, permission was given to establish forts in certain places suitable for their construction.

One of the French Canadian youth, whom the exploits of Iberville against the Hudson's Bay Company had fired with a spirit of emulation and who was head and shoulders above all that race of soldiers turned fur-traders, who now began to spread themselves throughout the great west—was Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Verandrye.

This gallant soldier and intrepid explorer, to whose memory history has as yet done but scant justice, was born at Three

Rivers on the 17th of November, 1685. At an early age he embraced the profession of arms, and at twenty-four fought so valorously against Marlborough's forces at Malplaquet that, pierced by nine wounds, he was left for dead upon the field of battle. Recovering, however, he returned to the colony, and at twenty-seven married the daughter of the Seigneur d'Isle Dupas, by whom he had four sons. These sons were all destined to be associated with their father in the subsequent explorations in Rupert's Land and the west.

Sieur de Verandrye.

At the hour when Verandrye was seized with his zeal for exploration and discovery, the Company's rivals already possessed numerous posts established by Iberville, Duluth, Frontenac and Denonville, and a host of lesser lights, in the west. Of one of these, on the shores of Lake Nepigon, at the extreme end of Lake Superior, Verandrye had been given the command.

While at this fort, a rumour had reached him of a mighty river flowing into the great ocean. Credulous of the truth of this report, borne to him by the Indians, Verandrye lost little time in communicating it to a friend, Father de Gonor, at Michilmackinac. It was shortly thereafter carried to Governor Beauharnois, who was induced, but not without much pleading, to grant Verandrye fifty men and a missionary for the purposes of exploration. But, although he had thus far succeeded, the only pecuniary aid upon which the explorer could rely was from the fur-trade. He was accordingly given a license to trade, and on the strength of this concession, certain merchants advanced him an outfit. He set out and arrived at Rainy Lake in September, 1731, traversed it, and erected a fort near the site of the present Fort Francis of a later day, to which he gave the name of St. Peter.

Verandrye sets out to explore the West.

A year later he built another fort on the western shore of the Lake of the Woods, and in 1733 paddled down to the mouth of the Winnipeg River to the lake of that name.

Crossing Lake Winnipeg, he ascended the Assiniboine River and constructed Fort Rouge. *

In 1738 the explorer's three sons, under their sire's instructions, made their way up the Assiniboine and built Fort la Reine, on the site of the present Portage la Prairie.

Well may it be said that the five years from 1733 to 1738 were years of cruel grief and disappointment for Verandrye. He had been struggling on to a realization of his dream in spite of the bitterest discouragements. One of his sons had been slain by the Sioux; he was without funds; fur-trading being with him only a subsidiary employment. His men lacking both courage and faith became unmanageable, and Verandrye addressed the most affecting letters to his monarch in France, who looked upon him and his schemes coldly. Those merchants, who had advanced him money, loaded him with their distrust, perpetually harassed him for returns, and loudly demanded his recall, so that he was forced to stand still and engage in barter when his whole soul cried aloud for him to press on in his path and reach the Pacific.

Verandrye divided his little party in the spring of 1742 and ascended the Souris River. Those who came to be familiar with the territory in a later day, when it was frequented by traders, might well appreciate what were the perils these pioneers encountered, and what dangers they escaped when they finally left the country of the peace—leaving Ojibways at Red River, and struck off into the land of the Sioux, a tribe then, from their ferocity to the whites, called the "tigers of the plains." But they were to go still farther. Already the eldest son of the explorer had reached the tribe of the Mandans in the Missouri, but owing to inability to obtain guides his party had been forced to return. He was again despatched by his father, this time in company with the younger son, known as the Chevalier, and two other Frenchmen into the unknown country to the west. This

* This fort has been thought to have been in the neighbourhood of Selkirk, Manitoba. But Verandrye would not have abandoned such an advantageous position as that which the meeting of the two rivers afforded at the modern Winnipeg.

little band of four made a journey of several hundred miles, entering into a league with one of the nations into whose country they penetrated, to lead them to the great Western Ocean. On the first day of January, 1743, they beheld, the first amongst white men, the eastern spurs of the northern Rocky Mountains. But here the Bow Indians, their guides, deserted them, and surrounded by hostile tribes, the party was forced to return. It was in this same year that the elder Verandrye, scarred and gaunt from his long wanderings in the wilderness, presented himself at Quebec to confront his enemies and traducers. They had represented as making an enormous fortune and leading an idle life, he who could point proudly to having taken possession of the country of the Upper Missouri for Lewis XV., and who had built a score and more of forts in the unknown regions of the West.

Verandrye's son reaches the Rockies.

"If 40,000 livres of debt that I have over my head," said Verandrye bitterly, "are an advantage, then I can compliment myself on being very rich, and I would have been much more so in the end, if I had continued."

His license was given to another who, however, made a poor showing by means of it, and it was not until Beauharnois's successor investigated Verandrye's claims that the explorer received some recognition at court. He was given a captaincy and the Cross of St. Lewis.

But the explorer had not waited for this. He had been pushing on in his work, and in 1748 ascended the Saskatchewan. The progress of the French was marked by more forts, one in Lake Dauphin and another called Bourbon at the extremity of his discoveries. Verandrye was about to cross the Rocky Mountains when death overtook him, on the 6th of December, 1749.

The sons of Verandrye were eager to continue his work and attain at last the Pacific. But Bigot, the intendant, was not their friend; he had other plans, and the Verandryes were deposed by favourites with not half their ability or their claims to honours and rewards. But they had paved the way and

now the French were reaping the profits of the fur-trade in the North-West on a great scale.

Thus were successively established, from 1731 to 1748, by Verandrye and his sons, Fort St. Pierre on Rainy Lake; Fort St. Charles on the Lake of the Woods; Fort Maurepas near the mouth of the Winnipeg; Fort Dauphin, on the north-west extremity of Lake Manitoba; Fort la Reine, on the southern extremity of the last-named lake; Fort Rouge, at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red River; Fort Bourbon, at the head of Lake Winnipeg; Fort Poskoyae, on the Saskatchewan, and Fort Lacerne (Nipawi), at the forks of the said river.

Verandrye's work.

In 1752, some years prior to the conquest of Canada, a relative of Verandrye, named Niverville, established Fort Jonquiere at the foot of the mountains.* Which of all these forts were to pass, after many vicissitudes, into the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company, we shall see in the course of subsequent pages. Verandrye and his compeers chose their sites with great care and ability; so that it was rarely that their successors were able to improve upon them. On the foundations or charred remnants of the French forts, should the structures themselves have perished, the English fur-traders, when they came, reared anew their posts.

While thus the French were pressing forward from the south and east at the same moment, a new rivalry threatened to spring up in the far north-west.

The eighteenth century broke upon an abated zeal of the Spaniards in extending their discoveries and dominions in the New World. Almost contemporaneously, the threads they threw down were grasped by another power, which the zeal and energy of one man had suddenly transformed from a collection of savage, barbarous tribes into a great nation. Having achieved conquest over his neighbours and the cohesion of his new empire, Peter the Great turned his attention to

Russia looks toward the New World.

* On the site of Fort Jonquiere, a century later, Captain Brisebois, of the Mounted Police, founded a post bearing his name. This post has given way to-day to the well-built and thriving town of Calgary.

a hardly inferior task. None knew as yet whether the two great continents, Asia and North America, united on the north-east. During Peter's residence in England, not the least of the institutions interesting him was the Hudson's Bay Company. A letter from Peter is quoted by a Russian writer, in which he alludes to the English rivalry for these trades "which had so long been the monopoly of Muscovy fur-hunting and fur-gathering." Doubtless even at this time he was speculating upon the chances of Russia competing with England for the fur traffic of the New World. But before such a competition could be brought about the question of the geographical connection between Asia and America must be settled. When he had been in Holland in 1717, he had been urged by some of the most eminent patrons of discovery amongst the Dutch to institute an expedition of investigation. But again other matters intervened; although in 1727 two Russian officers were equipped and in readiness to start overland when they were recalled for service in Sweden.

Not until he was on his death-bed did Czar Peter pen with his own hand the instructions to Admiral Aproxin which bore fruit later. It was then, too, that the idea, according to Lestkof, was discussed of a Russian Fur Company, similar in its methods and organization to the Hudson's Bay Company.

Peter directed first that one or two boats with decks should be built at Kamschatka, or in the vicinity; that with these a survey should be made of the most northerly coasts of his Asiatic Empire, to determine whether they were or were not contiguous to America. Also that the persons to whom the expedition might be entrusted should endeavour to ascertain whether there was any port in those regions belonging to Europe, and to keep a strict look-out for any European ship, taking care also to employ some skilful men in making enquiries regarding the names and situation of the coasts which they discovered. They were to keep an exact journal and to transmit it to St. Petersburg.

Peter died, but the Empress Catherine, his successor, was equally favourable to the scheme, and gave orders to fit out

the expedition. To Captain Vitus Bering was entrusted the command. Under him were two lieutenants, Martin Spangberg and Alexi Tchirikoff; and besides other subalterns were several excellent ship-carpenters.



MALDONADO'S "STRAIT OF ANIAN," 1609.

On February 5, 1735, they set out from St. Petersburg, and on March 16 arrived at Tobolsk, the capital of Siberia.

Bering returned from his first voyage satisfied that he had reached the utmost limits of Asia, and that no junction with

America existed. Some years elapsed, and in 1741 Bering, Spangberg and Tchirikoff again volunteered. This expedition was destined to prove fatal to the explorer; he got lost in a fog, intense cold prevailed, scurvy broke out amongst the men. and on a little island in Bering's Sea he breathed his last.

Bering's discoveries.



LAPIE'S MAP, 1821.

Although many years were to elapse before the Russians took any more active steps, they had, by virtue of Bering's discoveries, got a footing on the North American Continent, and were thus already neighbours, if not yet rivals, of the Hudson's Bay Company.

"It is very evident," wrote one of the contemporary chroniclers, "that for upwards of two centuries and a half an opinion has prevailed amongst the most knowing and experienced persons, that there is a passage to the north-west, and this built partly upon science, partly upon tradition. Now, it is very hard to conceive how such an opinion should maintain its credit if it was not founded in reality; for it is an old and true maxim that specious opinions endure but a short time, whereas truth is everlasting."

For many years the notion of a north-west passage had slept; but in 1737 it again attracted public attention. In that year Arthur Dobbs, a gentleman of some means and of scientific bent, made formal application to the Hudson's Bay Company that a search be undertaken. Upon his representations the Company sent forth two of their ships upon the quest. These, the *Churchill* and the *Musquash* went, however, no farther north than latitude 62°15′ and returned without seeing anything worthy of notice, save "a number of small islands, abundance of black whales, but no very great tides, the highest about two fathoms, the flood coming from the northward."

There had been for a great many years in the Company's employ an able mariner, Captain Christopher Middleton. For some reason or other Middleton had become dissatisfied with their service and one of his friends placed him in communication with the patron of discovery, Dobbs, and a close correspondence ensued.*

Dobbs was eager to employ Middleton in a search for the long-sought straits. This was by no means an easy matter. In the first place the Company flatly declined to participate in

* In one of his letters, dated 21st of January, 1737, Middleton held that the Company thought it their interest rather to prevent than forward new discoveries in that part of the world. "For that reason they won't suffer any of our journals to be made public," he adds. Than which certainly no observation could be truer.

the scheme, alleging that they had already done enough in that direction* and that the whole idea was a fallacy.

There was no north-west passage to India, and the sooner the public mind divested itself of the folly of supposing one existed the better it would be for the public purse and the public wisdom.

The Company pointed out that if Middleton should winter at either of the Company's factories it might drive the natives to trade with the French, who were always on the alert; and trade so lost would never return or be regained. They begged the Admiralty to restrain Captain Middleton from interfering with the Company's trade and invading their property and rights.

Dobbs, however, secured from the Admiralty for Middleton's use the bomb ketch *Furnace*, which, with another small vessel, the *Welcome*, was ready to sail early in June.

So opposed do the Company appear to have their domains meddled with by these fruitless explorations that they sent out a letter to their Governor at Churchill, which was the

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*A List of Vessels Fitted Out by the Hudson's Bay Company on Discovery of a North-West Passage.

1719—*Albany Frigate*, Capt. George Barlow, sailed from England on or about 5th June. Never returned.

Discovery, Capt. David Vaughan, sailed from England on or about 5th June. Never returned.

1719—*Prosperous*, Capt. Henry Kelsey, sailed from York Fort, June 19th. Returned 10th August following.

Success, John Hancock, master, sailed from Prince of Wales' Fort, July 2nd. Returned 10th August.

1721—*Prosperous*, Capt. Henry Kelsey, sailed from York Fort, June 26th. Returned 2nd Sept.

Success, James Napper, master, sailed from York Fort, June 26th. Lost 30th of same month.

1721—*Whalebone*, John Scroggs, master, sailed from Gravesend, 31st May; wintered at Prince of Wales' Fort.

1722—Sailed from thence 21st June. Returned July 25th following.

1737—*The Churchill*, James Napper, master, sailed from Prince of Wales' Fort, July 7th. Died 8th August; and the vessel returned the 18th.

The Musquash, Robert Crow, master, sailed from Prince of Wales' Fort, July 7th. Returned 22nd August.

most convenient harbour for the explorers to winter in, not to receive Middleton into their fort. Dobbs and his friends getting wind of this, complained to the Admiralty, who wrote to the Honourable Adventurers in a tone of decided reproof, observing that even if Middleton were to receive assistance and provisions, payment would be made for these to the Company on the return of the expedition to England.

The Company opposes further exploration.

After deliberating for some time, the Company thereupon wrote to the Lords of the Admiralty, saying that they had sent a further letter to Governor Norton requiring him to extend the necessary hospitality to Middleton. That the sort of hospitality the Company was prepared to dispense was not of too warm a character may be adjudged from the following:

HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE, LONDON, May 15, 1741.

Mr. James Isham and Council,
Prince of Wales' Fort, Churchill River:

GENTLEMEN, — Notwithstanding our orders to you, if Captain Middleton (who is sent abroad in the Government's service to discover a passage north-west) should by inevitable necessity be brought into real distress and danger of his life and loss of his ship, in such case you are then to give him the best assistance and relief you can.

A duplicate of this was put in Middleton's possession, who still dissatisfied, rushed off instantly with it to Whitehall. It was deemed necessary to apply to the Lords of the Regency that the Secretary of State might, by their orders, write to the Company to request the assistance they refused to the Admiralty. The Company, thus hemmed in, gave a letter couched in a more friendly style.

"It is plain,' remarks a contemporary writer, "that the Company believe there is a passage, which they want to conceal; for otherwise it would have been their interest to have the attempt made. If not found there would have been an end to prosecuting it any further, and they might probably have enjoyed their trade to the Bay, without its being coveted or enquired into."

Middleton owned to Dobbs that just before his departure the Company had endeavoured to bribe him with an offer of

£5,000 to return to their service, or that if he was determined to go, to pursue the voyage by Davis' Straits, or by any other way than the west of the Bay. They alleged that it would cost the Company that amount to support their right against the Crown and against private adventurers, and that "as he had been their friend, and knew all their concerns, it would be better to give him that sum than to give it to their lawyers." The Company did not deny that such an offer had been made by two or three of the committee privately.

Middleton now proceeded on his journey in quest of the famed north-west passage. It is charged that on his arrival in the Bay he never once went ashore or sent his boat to search for any inlet or to try the tide. He tried the current in latitude 63° 20′, and found it very rapid, in spite of the fact that there existed a great deal of ice to the northward. Its presence compelled him to stand off from shore until he passed Cape Dobbs, beyond which he found an opening northwestward. In this opening he sought shelter for three weeks.

Middleton explores for a north-west passage.

No voyage of discovery since the world began was ever made under such circumstances. Numerous members of the crew, who had got wind of the situation, were filled, or professed to be filled, with distrust of their captain. Caring nothing about the voyage itself or the object for which it was undertaken, they entered with zeal a hundred times a day into plots to make the commander's life unbearable. The supposed passage was christened the "Forbidden Straits," and the crews vastly amused themselves with Middleton's supposed discomfiture. Several were very nearly yard-armed for spreading reports that the captain had purposely sailed past the straits. Sometimes the captain merely laughed at the views of his subordinates; at other times, it is said, he flew into a temper, and indulged in threats and abuse. Once, when from the number of whales and the breadth and depth of the river, word sped from mouth to mouth that it was a strait they were in, and no river, "he rated several of them for pretending to say so against his opinion, saying his clerk was

a double-tongued rascal, that he would cane the lieutenant, broomstick the master, and lash any others who would concern themselves about the voyage." It was, moreover, charged against Middleton that he interdicted the keeping of private journals, and that if any disobeyed this order he threatened to break open their boxes and get possession of such records. Once when the lieutenants and masters were absent down the river to look for a cove for the ships, Middleton grimly observed that he supposed the former would bring back "some romantick account of a strait or passage." Nevertheless, for his part, he would not take the ships a foot farther. Intrigue characterized the whole of this voyage of discovery.

Trouble between Middleton and his men.

The officers of both the *Furnace* and the *Discovery* took turns in making jaunts into the country. On the 8th of August, Captain Middleton, the clerk, gunner, and carpenter went ashore at Cape Frigid, and after pacing some fifteen miles into the country, returned, to find the ship drifted, although it lacked some hours of high water. Rankin and the men on board from this had become convinced that it was the effects of the flood from the supposed strait. The captain laughed them to scorn, and said that if it came from any strait at all it was Hudson's Strait.

Two northern Indians were taken on board the *Discovery*, and Thompson, the surgeon, who could speak some of the southern tongue, began busying himself making a vocabulary of their language. At this innocent occupation he was observed by Middleton, who threatened to "crop him" in case he persisted. When they reached Marble Island, although the two Indians were desirous of going to England, he put the pair ashore in a bad boat they were ignorant of how to manage. The supplications of the unhappy savages were useless to turn the Company's captain from his purpose. In vain they told him that the island was three leagues from the mainland, and a hundred miles from their own country; that it was inhabited by the Esquimaux, their enemies.

"The Captain gave them some provisions, ammunition,

hatchets and toys. The excuse he made for not bringing them to England was, that upon his return his friends might be out of the Admiralty, and as he had no orders to take them home, they would be left a charge upon him." This was plausible, but Middleton's detractors did not rest there. They accused the captain of saying that he was afraid the Indians, when they learned to speak English, would be talking of the copper mine and the north-west passage, and would thereby put the public to the expense of sending out more ships in quest of it. "And this, no doubt," commented Dobbs, "was the true reason for that piece of cruelty, for he thought if they came to England he should *not be able to conceal the passage.*"

On Middleton's return, after his quest, he was accused of saying, "My character is so well established as a discoverer that no man will ever, hereafter, attempt to discover the north-west passage."

He certainly received a cordial invitation from the Government, the Admiralty and the Court. Immediately upon his arrival in London he communicated with several of the partners of the Hudson's Bay Company. The preparation of his journal occupied for a time his leisure. "He himself," says Dobbs, "had got great reputation from the Royal Society for his observations upon cold; and for what he had discovered had got a medal from them. He was upon good terms with the Lords of the Admiralty, and was to dedicate his charts and discoveries to the King and noblemen of the first rank as well as to the Lords of the Admiralty." That the Lords of the Admiralty were perfectly satisfied with his conduct, there is every reason to believe, as in the following year Middleton was placed in command of the *Shark*, a sloop.

Middleton returns without discovering the passage.

All this naturally put him into a position to serve those under him. All his recommendations for promotion only strengthened the suspicions gathering in the mind of Dobbs and his fellow-patrons. "He had recommended also his lieutenant, and thought none other on board had weight enough to impeach his proceedings, which, if they

failed in, would ruin their characters; so that securing his officers, he thought all things would be safe amongst the crew. But Middleton was not one to forget the patron and prime mover of the expedition, whom he endeavoured to propitiate by sending him an abstract of his journal. This abstract seemed, to Dobbs, to be so full of contradictions and discrepancies, that he wrote to the explorer to send him, if possible, the journal itself. He had scarcely dispatched this communication when he received a letter from Lanrick, "a gentleman who had been bred a scholar," who had accompanied Middleton on the voyage. It was substantially the same account rendered by the captain, with this added paragraph:

"Sir,—This account I should have sent you before now but that the Captain, for reasons to himself best known, desired that none of us should say anything about it relating to the discovery for a little."

This very natural desire on the part of an explorer, about to become an author, seems to have been fraught with deep and incriminating significance to Dobbs. After a short time the whole of Middleton's journal reached him; it appeared to confirm all Dobbs's presentiments.

Dobbs and the other patrons were therefore convinced that Middleton had played them false for the Hudson's Bay Company; and their belief in a north-west passage was strengthened rather than weakened. In their report, after going over the whole account of the voyage furnished them, they were especially severe upon Middleton. "His whole conduct," they said, "from his going to Churchill until his return to England, and even since his return, it will appear plainly that he intended to serve the Company at the public expense, and contrived everything so as to stifle the discovery, and to prevent others from undertaking it for the future so as to secure the favour of the Company and the reward they said they promised him before he began the voyage."

Suspicion attaches to Middleton.

An informer appeared, who testified that Middleton had declared in presence of the others at a council held at York

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Factory, Churchill, that he "should be able to make the voyage, but none on board should be any the wiser and he would be a better friend to the Company than ever."

Middleton was charged in public with neglect in having failed to explore the line of coast which afforded a probability of a passage to the north-west. The principal points at issue appear to have been in respect to the discovery by Middleton, of the Wager River, Repulse Bay, and the Frozen Strait. In this century Sir Edward Parry has remarked: "The accuracy of Captain Middleton is manifest upon the point most strenuously argued against him, for our subsequent experience has not left the smallest doubt of Repulse Bay and the northern part of the Welcome being filled by a rapid tide flowing into it from the eastward through the Frozen Strait." Dobbs, fully impressed with a conviction that the captain's story of the Frozen Strait was all chimera, as well as everything Middleton had said concerning that part of the voyage, confidently insisted on the probability of the tide finding its way through Wager River, or at least through some arm of the sea communicating with that inlet from the westward.*

One detail only was lacking to render the situation farcical —an anonymous letter. This reached Dobbs on the 21st of January, and ran in this absurd vein:—

"This script is only open to your Eyes, which have been sealed or closed with too much (we cannot say Cunning) Artifice, so as they have not been able to discover our Discoverer's Pranks. All Nature cries aloud that there is a Passage, and we are sure there is one from Hudson's Bay to Japan. Send a letter directed to Messieurs Brook and Cobham, who are Gentlemen who have been the Voyage, and cannot bear so Glorious an Attempt, should die under the Hands of Mercenary Wretches, and they will give you such pungent reasons as will awaken all your Industry. They desire it may be kept secret so long as they shall think fit; they are willing to venture their Lives, their Fortunes, their All, in another attempt; and they are no inconsiderable persons, but such as have had it

* "On looking through the correspondence at the Admiralty, it is impossible not to be struck with the straightforward manliness, candour and honesty of purpose exemplified by Captain Middleton throughout this trying business. It was a cruel attack."—Sir John Barrow.

much at heart ever since they saw the Rapidity of Tides in the Welcome. The frozen straits is all Chimera, and everything you have yet read or seen concerning that part of our Voyage. We shall send you some unanswerable Queries. Direct for us at the Chapter Coffee House, St. Paul's Churchyard, London."

It was now clear that Middleton's voyage had been made in vain, and that another would shortly be attempted.

CHAPTER XXII.

1744–1748.

War again with France—Company takes Measures to Defend its Forts and Property—"Keep your guns loaded"—Prince "Charlie"—His Stock in the Company Confiscated—Further Instructions to the Chief Factors—Another Expedition to Search for a North-West Passage—Parliament Offers Twenty Thousand Pounds Reward—Cavalier Treatment from Governor Norton—Expedition Returns—Dobbs' Enmity—Privy Council Refuse to Grant his Petition—Press-gang Outrages—Voyage of the *Seahorse*.

In the year 1740 the state of affairs in Europe seemed to point to war between England and France. England had declared war against Spain, and although for a time Lewis XV. and his ministers sympathized with the latter country, they endeavoured to avoid being drawn into a conflict with her powerful neighbour and hereditary enemy across the Channel. Yet such a conflict seemed inevitable, when by degrees Spanish commerce became shattered under the blows of King George's navy. Apprehensive that England would wrest from Spain her colonies, France resolved to take sides with Spain. In 1744 war was declared, and hostilities, which had been in abeyance for thirty-one years, at once recommenced in the transatlantic possessions of both crowns.

War with France.

It was therefore decided at a general court of the Adventurers, at which no fewer than seventy were present, to take measures to avoid a repetition of the disasters of fifty years previously. They felt that their enemies were now many, who would be glad to see them driven from the Bay, and that less assistance might be expected from the Government than at any of the crises which had previously overtaken them. We have seen to what this was due. It now behooved the Company to gird up its loins, and if the foe came, to strike, and strike with force.

It was the Hudson's Bay Company against France and Spain. The incident of Louisburg alone saved the Company from destruction.

To illustrate the temper of the Company instructions were immediately drawn up by the Committee, and despatched to the chief factors in the Bay. The one addressed to Joseph Isbister and Council at Albany Fort was dated the 10th of May, 1744.

"The English and French having declared war," it ran, "against each other, and the war with Spain still continuing, we do hereby strictly direct you to be always on your guard, and to keep a good watch, and that you keep all your men as near home as possible.

"We do also direct that you fix your cannon in the most proper places to defend yourselves and annoy an enemy, after which you are to fire each cannon once with powder to see how they prove, and instruct your men to the use of them without firing; and that you keep them constantly loaded with powder and ball, ready for service. You are also to keep your small arms loaded and in good order and at hand, to be easily come at; and that those loaded arms be drawn or discharged once a month, and be well cleaned; and you are to exercise your men once a week till they are well disciplined and afterwards once a month. And you are also to keep a sufficient number of your trading guns loaded and at hand in case of an attack; and if there be any Indians that you can confide in, and will be of service in your defence, we recommend it to you to employ them in such manner as you think proper.

Bellicose instructions from the Company.

"We have wrote to the factory at Moose River, that in case they have any intelligence of the French coming down that river to attack them, they are immediately to send you notice thereof, that you may make the necessary preparations for your defence, and that there be a constant correspondence and intelligence between each factory for the safety of both.

"As we rely on the courage and conduct of Mr. Isbister, our chief, in case of an attack from the enemy, which, if done

at all on your factory, we apprehend it will be by land in the winter, from Canada; in which case the enemy not being able to bring down any cannon with them, we doubt not of your frustrating their designs and repulsing them.

"In case you are attacked at Henly House, and notwithstanding a vigorous resistance you should have the misfortune to be overpowered, then you are to nail up the cannon, blow up the House, and destroy everything that can be of service to the enemy, and make the best retreat you can to the factory." The letters to the other Governors were in similar strain.

The Company directed Isbister to get "the best information you can from the trading Indians, whether the French are making any preparations to come down to the factory, or have lodged any provisions, stores or ammunition at certain distances from their supply. We also direct you, for your better security, at all times to keep two Indians in the factory with civil and kind usage, and send them out every morning for intelligence, to a proper distance, so that they may return in the evening; and provided that they do not return that it be an alarm to you, and that you thereupon prepare yourselves for a vigorous defence. But," it was added, "you must not, upon any consideration, let those Indians have the least knowledge of the use you intend to make of their not returning."

At the Company's urgent request letters of marque were granted to the *Prince Rupert* against both France and Spain. The *Prince Rupert* was one hundred and eighty tons burthen, and the crews were full of expectation that the voyage would yield them a prize of some sort or another. But they were destined not merely to be disappointed, but to be given a great fright into the bargain. When in the neighbourhood of Davis' Straits, where a whale fishery was established, several large vessels were sighted. They seemed to the Company's captain undoubtedly French men-of-war. Filled with fear, he immediately turned round in his tracks and bore away as fast as his sails could carry him, and after beating

Letters of marque to the Company's ships.

about for a time managed to pass through the straits unobserved. So convinced were the Company on the return of its ship in the autumn that the French were lying in wait for its ships at the straits, they sought the Admiralty with a request for a convoy to York Fort, to return with its vessels the following autumn.

A convoy was granted, but it was hardly necessary. Louisburg had fallen, and all the strength the French could muster was being directed in an attempt to win back that fortress from the English. No French ships could therefore be spared to cruise north of latitude fifty in North America.

One consequence of the war with France was a revival of the hopes of the Jacobites. In 1744 Charles Edward, the grandson of James II., was placed by Lewis in command of "a formidable armament," and in the following year the young Pretender placed his foot on a little island of the Hebrides, where for three weeks he stood almost alone. But the Highland blood was fired; the clans rallied to the standard of "Prince Charlie," and when he began his march on Edinburgh, several thousand Scottish zealots had rallied to his standard. "James the Eighth" was proclaimed at the Town Cross of the capital, and when his troops and the English regiments met at Preston Pans, in September, the latter were defeated with heavy loss. But although this victory swelled his numbers it did not bring the Lowlanders and English to fight for him. "Hardly a man," we are told, "had risen in his support as he passed through the districts where Jacobitism boasted of its strength. The people flocked to see his march as if it had been a show. Catholics and Tories abounded in Lancashire, but only a single squire took up arms." The knell of Jacobitism was rung, and after a brief success the English forces fell upon Prince Charles Edward at Culloden Moor, and cut his little army to pieces. Fifty of his followers and adherents in England ascended the scaffold; Lords Lovat, Balmerino and Kilmarnock were beheaded, and over forty noblemen and gentlemen were attainted by Act of Parliament. Scarcely a month had elapsed from Charles Edward's escape to France after his romantic adventures,

when a motion was submitted to the Governor and Company of Adventurers in England trading into Hudson's Bay, ordering the confiscation of the stock held by the heir of the second Governor of the Company, King James II. The exiled monarch had never relinquished his share, and under the name of "John Stanion" the dividends had always reached him. But the Jacobite rising affected his fellow-adventurers' complaisance, and by 1746 "John Stanion" had ceased to figure as an active partner of the Company.*

Confiscation of Prince Charlie's stock.

Under date of 3rd of May, 1745, the Company wrote to Governor Isbister and Council, at Albany Fort, to say that they had "augmented the complement of men (as you desired) at your Factory and Moose Fort, that in case of need you may assist each other, and thereby we hope you will be enabled to baffle the designs of the enemy.

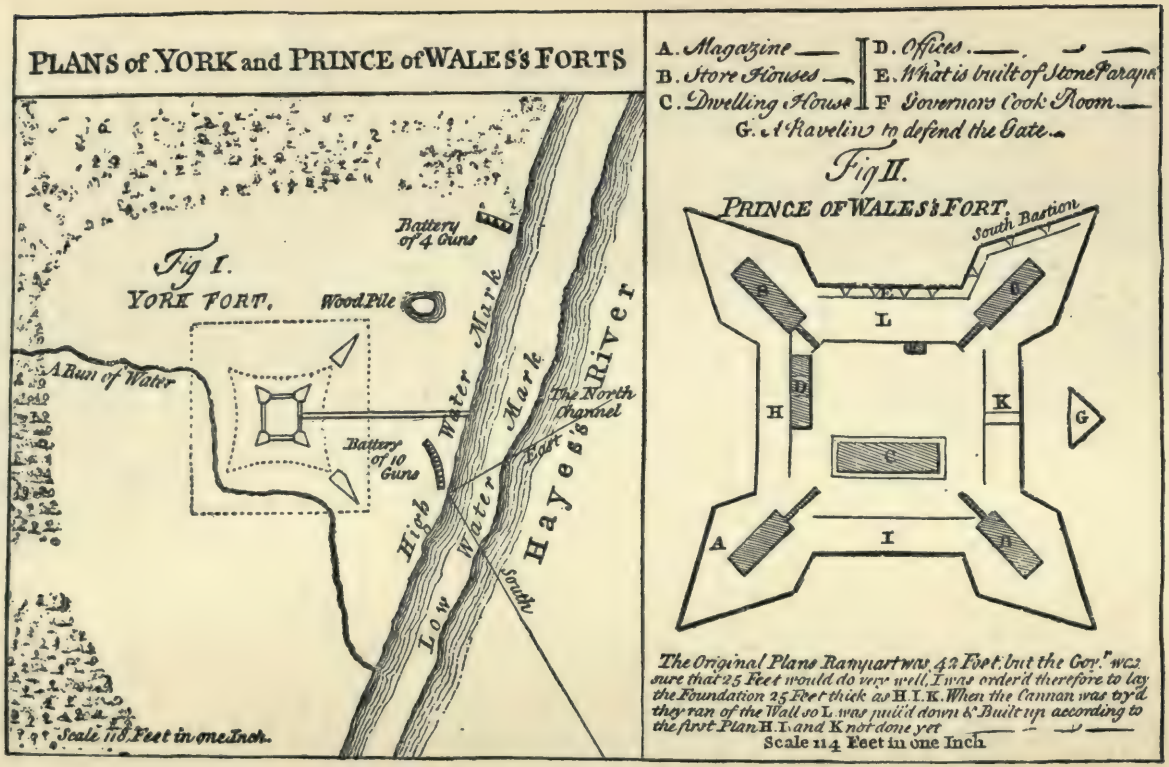
"We do direct," it pursued, "that not only a continual correspondence be kept between you and Moose Fort, but that you correspond with the Factory at Slude River, York Fort, and Prince of Wales' Fort as often as you can, and if under any apprehensions of an attack, to give immediate notice to Moose Fort. We still recommend your diligence in getting intelligence and information of the designs of the French."

It also urged Governor Pilgrim and Council, at Prince of Wales' Fort, "to keep a good watch, and your men near home, except those that are guarding the battery at Cape Merry, but not to hinder a proper number to be employed in providing a sufficient quantity of the country provisions to prevent the complaint of those persons that murmur for want of victuals; and we recommend sobriety, that you may be capable of making a vigorous defence if attacked.

Further instructions to Company's officials.

"We again recommend your keeping the land, round the Fort and the Battery at Cape Merry, free from everything

* The name of John Stanion certainly appears in the list of proprietors of Hudson's Bay stock, published in 1749, but it is followed by the significant term *deceased.*



PLANS OF YORK AND PRINCE OF WALES' FORTS.

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that may possibly conceal or shelter an enemy, that you may thereby prevent being surprised.

"We again direct that you keep up a general correspondence with all the Factories, and get what intelligence you can of the designs of the French."

The course of events now bids us return to Dobbs and the renewed endeavours to find a north-west passage through the Company's territory.

A number of public-spirited persons came forward for the prosecution of the design. Parliament was urged to act in the matter, and a bill was carried, offering a reward of twenty thousand pounds for the discovery of the north-west passage.

"Whereas," ran the Act, "the discovering of a north-west passage through Hudson's Straits, to the Western American Ocean, will be of great Benefit and advantage to the trade of this Kingdom; and whereas it will be a great encouragement to Adventurers to attempt the same, if a public reward was given to such person or persons as shall make a perfect discovery of the said passage: May it therefore please your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that if any ship or vessel, ships or vessels belonging to any of his Majesty's subjects, shall find out and sail through any passage by sea between Hudson's Bay and the Western and Southern Ocean of America, the owner or owners of such ship or ships, vessel or vessels as aforesaid, so first finding out and sailing through the said passage, his or their executors, administrators or assigns shall be entitled to receive and shall receive as a reward for such discovery, the sum of twenty thousand pounds."

Parliament and the North-West passage.

Parliament took care, however, to declare that nothing in the Act should "in any ways extend or be construed to take away or prejudice any of the estates, rights or privileges of or

belonging to the Governor and Company of Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay."

With such encouragement, it was not long before a North-West Association was formed for the raising of £10,000, which sum it was thought would answer the necessary expense of the proposed expedition. The ships bought by the Committee were one of one hundred and eighty tons, called the *Dobbs' Galley*, and another of one hundred and forty tons, to which the name of the *California* was given. Each of these vessels was got ready, and a sufficient quantity of stores and provisions put on board. A cargo of merchandise, suitable for presents to the natives was put on board, after assurance to the Hudson's Bay Company that these would not be used for purpose of barter. The command of the *Dobbs' Galley* was entrusted to Captain William Moor, an old servant of the Company; that of the *California* being given to Francis Smith. By way of encouragement, premiums were settled on officers and crew, in case of success. Thus the captain was to have £500, each of the mates £200, and every other officer and seaman a reward suitable to his station. Over and above all this, in case they were so fortunate as to take any prizes, such were to belong entirely to them.

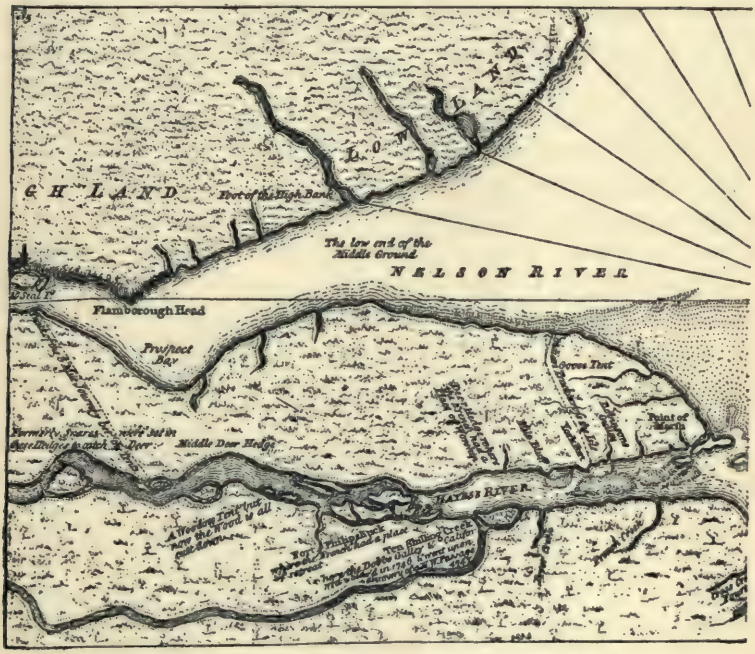
Expedition of the North-West Association.

On the 10th of May the expedition started. In order that they might get safely beyond the British Isles without danger from the French privateersmen, the Admiralty appointed a convoy to meet them at the Island of Pomona, in the Orkneys. Judge of their surprise to find this convoy commanded by Captain Middleton himself, on board the *Shark*. Some days later the explorer of 1742 and the explorers of 1746 bade farewell to one another.

For some months the ships cruised about the Bay. At last, in September, it was decided to set about preparations for wintering in some part of Hays' River. This they found in a creek about five miles above York Factory, on the south side of the stream. The locality was, perhaps, hardly congenial in a social sense.

"The Governor," says one who accompanied the expedition as the agent of the patrons,* "being now convinced of our intentions to winter there, used his utmost endeavours that we might lay our ships below the fort, in a place open to the sea, where they would have been in all probability beat to pieces, either from the waves of the sea setting in or the breaking of the ice; but as his arguments were of no efficacy in persuading us, and finding himself disappointed in this, as in his former scheme,

Governor Norton.



CONTEMPORARY MAP SHOWING THE HAYS' RIVER.

being still resolved to distress us as much as possible, he sent most of the Indians, whose chief employment is to kill deer, geese, etc., into the country, on purpose that we might not make use of them in that way, or be in any wise benefited by their means."

The charge that Governor Norton desired the destruction of the ships is too absurd to refute at this late day; neverthe-

* Henry Ellis.

less there is little doubt that the explorers believed it, and anything else their inflamed imaginations and prejudices against the Company suggested. Even when Norton designed to show them kindness, the design was twisted into one of sinister shape. For instance, hearing that their supply of liquor was short, when Christmas came around, he sent as a present to the explorers, at the little log-house they had christened Montague House, a couple of casks of brandy with which to make good cheer. Soon afterwards scurvy broke out, and the disease was set down immediately to the brandy. "Our people had been healthy enough before," says Ellis.

But even when the scurvy had carried off several of the men at Montague House, Governor Norton was alleged to have refused both to succour or to suggest a remedy. "The Indians were charged not to come near us, or to furnish us with anything (and this out of consideration for them), because we had a contagious distemper amongst us." Norton's sole view in all his actions is represented to have been to hinder and distress the explorers, "which," remarks the writer quoted, philosophically, "is the encouragement that all are to expect who go in search of a north-west passage *from such neighbours*."

When spring came the expedition resumed its labours. It is said the crews were full of alacrity and cheerfulness. One honest seaman, "whose sole delight was a delicious dram," was so enthusiastic over the discovery that "in the warm sincerity of his heart he could not help saying, with a good, round oath, 'Now, I had rather find the north-west passage than half an anchor of brandy!'"

The summer was spent in coasting the whole north-west side of the Bay. But, alas, the north-west passage so ardently and characteristically desired by the "honest sea-man," was not found, and by the 14th of October the expedition was back again in England, after an absence of one year four months and seventeen days. The explorers and the patrons might well have been discouraged from further attempts, albeit they returned, we are told, "with clearer

Return of the expedition to England.

and fuller proofs, founded on plain facts and accurate experiments, that such a passage existed." Nevertheless, if the Company breathed easier on their return, it was a temporary relief. A new trial was in store for the Honourable Adventurers.

In 1748, war still continuing with France and Spain, the Company again issued strict orders to Governor Spence at Albany Fort to be always on his guard, and "to keep a good watch and your men near home, but not to hinder a proper number to be employed in providing a sufficient quantity of the country provisions, particularly geese, which we find you constantly employ the Indians only to kill for you, and which we are dissatisfied with; that being such a material article, you ought always to blend some of your people with the natives in the goose seasons, that they may understand how to kill them, and thereby lessen your dependence on the native hunters."

To the Governor of Prince of Wales' Fort it directed that he should "constantly keep his great guns loaded with powder and ball ready for service during the time the rivers are open. You are also to keep your small arms loaded and in good order, and at hand, to be easily come at, which loaded arms and cannon are to be drawn once a month and well cleaned, and to exercise your men as often as requisite, whom we expect by this time are artists, not only in the use of small arms but also of cannon, that the great expense we have been at in this particular may answer the end proposed thereby in case of an attack. You are also to keep a sufficient number of your trading guns loaded and at hand, which charges are also to be drawn every month, and if there be any Indians you can confide in, and will be of service to you in your defence, we recommend it to you to employ them in such manner as you think proper."

Certainly if a French commander of even Iberville's power had appeared before the forts of the Company in 1748 he would have met with a far different reception to that which was offered to that champion in 1697.

The Company suffered much from the press-gangs, from time to time, and in eras of war the evil was almost intolerable. It was well-known that the sailors in its employ were amongst the ablest and hardiest on the high seas, which fact exposed them perpetually to the onslaughts of the crimps and bullies.

In 1739 the Company's vessel, the *Seahorse*, was intercepted by the man-of-war *Warwick*, and seventeen men of the *Seahorse* crew captured by the press-gang for services in the navy.

That the *Seahorse* might not be totally without servants, a number of incompetent landsmen were put aboard in their stead. Nevertheless, the voyage was continued to the Bay, although not without great peril, not arriving until 27th of September. The voyage of the disabled *Seahorse* was long a tradition in the Company's service.

By an Order-in-Council dated the 4th of February, 1748, a petition from Arthur Dobbs and members of a committee appointed by the subscribers for finding out a passage to the Western and Southern Ocean of America, "was referred to the consideration of a committee of Parliament." After hearing counsel for and against the Company, this committee of two members decided that "considering how long the Company have enjoyed and acted under this charter without interruption or encroachment, we cannot think it advisable for his Majesty to make any express or implied declaration against the validity of it till there has been some judgment of a court of justice to warrant it." Dobbs and his friends were enraged at this decision, and lost no time in taking other steps.

Dobbs' petition rejected by a Parliamentary committee.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1748–1760.

Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry Appointed—Aim of the Malcontents—Lord Strange's Report—Testimony of Witnesses—French Competition—Lords of Plantations desire to Ascertain Limits of Company's Territory—Defeat of the Labrador Company—Wolfe's Victory—"Locked up in the Strong Box"—Company's Forts—Clandestine Trade—Case of Captain Coats.

"Mr. Sharpe, the Company's solicitor," we read in the Company's minute-books, under date of March 10th, 1748, "attending the Committee acquainted them that a motion was yesterday made and carried in the House of Commons to enquire into the state and condition of the countries and trade of Hudson's Bay, and also the right the Company pretend to have by charter to the property of the land, and exclusive trade to those countries, and that a committee was appointed accordingly."

Parliamentary enquiry.

The Adventurers were not caught entirely unawares. They had expected some such move on the part of their opponents, and now determined that since they could not ward off the enquiry, they would take the best means to present the most favourable statement of the Company's case to the nation. A ransacking of books and records ensued; and a rigorous search after facts bearing on the beneficent character of the Company's rule and policy; and these proofs being at length ready, were placed by the following December in the form of a memorial in the hands of every member of the House of Commons.

The enquiry aroused the greatest national interest. It began soon after Christmas, 1748, and lasted for two months.

What the malcontents desired is, perhaps, best explained in the words of their prime mover: "By opening," said he, "the trade in the Bay, many thousands more would be

employed in trade, and a much greater vent would be opened for our manufactures. Whereas all the gain we have at present, whilst the trade is confined to the Company, is the employment of one hundred and twenty men in all their factories, and two or three ships in that trade, manned with perhaps one hundred and twenty men in time of war, to enrich nine or ten * merchants at their country's expense; at the same time betraying the nation, by allowing the French to encroach upon us at the bottom of the Bay, having given up by that means the greatest part of their trade there to the French. It is, therefore, humbly submitted to the Government, whether it is not just, as well as prudent, to open that trade to all the British merchants, and resume at the same time the charter, so far as to take from them all those lands they have not reclaimed or occupied after seventy years possession, leaving them only their factories, and such lands as they have reclaimed adjoining to them; and to give grants as usual in other colonies to all who shall go over to trade and make settlements in the country; for no grants were ever intended to be made to them, to enable them to prevent other subjects of Britain from planting colonies in those countries, which they themselves would not plant or occupy; for such a power, instead of being beneficial, would be the greatest prejudice to Britain, and is become a general law in the colonies, that those who take grants of land and don't plant them in a reasonable, limited time, forfeit their rights to those lands, and a new grant is made out to such others as shall plant and improve them; and if this grant be not immediately resumed so far and the trade laid open, and some force be not sent to secure our southern possessions in the Bay by the Government in case there should be a French war, we shall see the French immediately dispossess the Company of all their factories but Churchill, and all these countries and that trade will be in the possession of the French." So ran the argument of the Company's enemies.

Plea of the malcontents.

* The number of the Adventurers was, before the enquiry of 1749, a mystery. By many it was charged that they were not above a dozen or fifteen.

On the 24th of April, 1749, Lord Strange presented, on behalf of the Select Committee, the report to Parliament.

"The Committee," said he, "appointed to enquire into the state and condition of the countries adjoining to Hudson's Bay and the trade carried on there; and to consider how those countries may be settled and improved, and the trade and fisheries there extended and increased; and also to enquire into the right the Company of Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay pretend to have, by charter, to the property of lands and exclusive trade to those countries; have pursuant to the order of the House, examined into the several matters to them referred.

"Your Committee thought proper, in the first place, to enquire into the nature and extent of the charter granted by King Charles the Second, to the Company of Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay; under which charter the present Company claim as right to lands and an exclusive trade to those countries; which charter being laid before your Committee, they thought it necessary for the information of the House to annex a copy thereof to this report."

The charter, published now for the first time, was deemed to be valid.

The Committee had examined the witnesses in the case These witnesses were: Joseph Robson, who had been employed in the Bay for six years as a stonemason; Richard White, who had been a clerk at Albany Fort and elsewhere; Matthew Sargeant, who had been employed in the Company's service and "understood the Indian language"; John Hayter, who had been house carpenter to the Company for six years at Moose River; Matthew Gwynne, who had been twice at Hudson's Bay; Edward Thompson, who had been three years at Moose River as surgeon; Enoch Alsop, who had been armourer to the Company at Moose River; Christopher Bannister, who had been armourer and gunsmith, and had resided in the Bay for twenty-two years; Robert Griffin, silversmith, who had been five years in the Company's service; Thomas

Witnesses called by the committee.

Barnet Smith, who went over to Albany in 1741; Alexander Brown, who had been six years at Hudson's Bay as surgeon; Captain Thomas Mitchell, who had commanded a sloop of the Company.

Besides the above witnesses there was, of course, Dobbs himself, who was "examined as to the information he had received from a French-Canadese Indian (since deceased) who was maintained at the expense of the Admiralty, on the prospect of his being of service on the discovery of a north-west passage." Dobbs "informed your Committee that the whole of that discourse is contained in part of a book printed for the witness in 1744, to which he desired leave to refer."* There also appeared Captain William Moor, who had been employed in Hudson's Bay from a boy; Henry Spurling, merchant, who had traded in furs for twenty-eight years past, during which time he had dealt with the Hudson's Bay Company; Captain Carruthers, who had been in the Company's service thirty-five years ago; and Arthur Slater, who had been employed by the Company on the East Main.

The opposition endeavoured to show that one object aimed at in granting a charter to the Hudson's Bay Company was to further the discovery of the north-west passage. This of course was absurd. It was charged that they had done almost nothing in this direction, which the Adventurers on their part rebutted by furnishing Parliament with a list of the ships they had fitted out for such a discovery.

In the evidence before the Committee, it became clear that the witnesses were not unanimous, especially concerning the probability of finding a north-west passage.

The evidence of Edward Thompson, the ship surgeon on the *Furnace*, for example, states that he has the "greatest reason to believe there is one, from the winds, tides and black whales; and he thinks the place to be at Chesterfield Inlet; that the reason of their coming back was they met the other boat which had been five leagues farther, and the crew told them

* Dobbs's "Hudson's Bay," a hysterical work, which was throughout an attack on Captain Christopher Middleton.

the water was much fresher and shallower there, but where he was the water was fifty fathoms deep, and the tide very strong; the ebb six hours and the flood two, to the best of his remembrance; that it is not common for the tide to flow only two hours." He imagined it to be obstructed by another tide from the westward. The rapidity of the tide upwards was so great that the spray of the water flew over the bow of the schooner, and was "so salt that it candied on the men's shoes, but the tide did not run in so rapid a manner the other way." Captain William Moor, being asked if he believed there was a north-west passage to the South Seas, said he believed there was a communication, but "whether navigable or not he cannot say; that if there is any such communication, 'tis farther northward than he expected; that if it is but short, as 'tis but probable to conclude from the height of the tides, 'tis possible it might be navigable. It was the opinion of all the persons sent on that discovery that a north-west wind made the highest tides." According to Captain Carruthers, "he don't apprehend there is any such passage; but if there is, he thinks it impracticable to navigate it on account of the ice; that he would rather choose to go round by Cape Horn; and that it will be impossible to go and return through such passage in one year; and he thinks 'tis the general opinion of seamen, that there is no such passage." In which opinion the seamen were in the right, although Dobbs and his friends were long to hold the contrary.

Evidence as to a north-west passage.

John Tomlinson, a London merchant, testified that he was a subscriber to "the undertaking for finding a north-west passage, which undertaking was dropped for want of money; that he should not choose to subscribe again on the same terms; that he can not pretend to say whether there is such a passage or not, or whether, if found, it could ever be rendered useful to navigation."

It was only to be expected that the merchants, having no share in the Company's profits, should be, to a man, in favour of throwing open the trade of Hudson's Bay. Tomlinson, for example, gave it out as his opinion that if the charter were

revoked more ships would be sent and more Indians brought down to trade. "This is confirmed," said he, "by the experience of the Guinea trade, which, when confined to a company, employed not above ten ships, and now employs one hundred and fifty." He moreover asserted that "the case of the Guinea trade was exactly similar, where the ships are near one another, and each endeavours to get the trade; and the more ships lie there the higher the prices of negroes."

The Company was obliged, in the course of this enquiry, to divulge a number of facts relating to its trade, which had until then remained secret. Parliament was informed that the trade between London and Hudson's Bay was carried on in 1748, and for some years previous, by means of four ships; that the cost of the exports was in that year £5,012 12s. 3d.; that the value of the sales of furs and other imports amounted to £30,160 5s. 11d.

The Company's profits.

As for the "charge attending the carrying on of the Hudson's Bay trade, and maintaining their factories," it was, in 1748, £17,352 4s. 10d. Thus a trade which involved only £5,000 a year in exports brought back a return of £30,000. Even when the outlay for working and maintenance of forts and establishments was considered, there was, in dull times, a profit of forty per cent. on actual paid-up capital.

With regard to French competition, many of the witnesses were most emphatic. Robson, for instance, "thought that the beavers which are brought down to the Company are refused by the French from their being a heavy commodity; for the natives who come to trade with the Company dispose of their small, valuable furs to the French, and bring down their heavy goods to the Company in summer when the rivers are open, which they sell, and supply the French with European goods purchased from the Company."

"The French," said Richard White, another witness, "intercept the Indians coming down with their trade," he having seen them with guns and clothing of French manufacture; and further an Indian had told him that there was a French settlement up Moose River, something to the southward of the

west, at the distance, as the witness apprehended, of about fifty miles. "The French deal in light furs, and take all of that sort they can get, and the Indians bring the heavy to us. Sometimes the Indians bring down martens' skins, but that is when they don't meet with the French; but never knew any Indians who had met the French bring down light furs. The French settlement on Moose River is at Abbitibi Lake. The trade," concluded the witness, "might be further extended by sending up Europeans to winter amongst the natives, which, though the Company have not lately attempted, the French actually do."

"The French," said another, "intercept the trade; to prevent which the Company some time ago built Henley House,* which did, in some measure, answer the purpose: but if they would build farther in the country it would have a better effect. The French went there first, and are better beloved; but if we would go up into the country the French Indians would trade with us."

Another of the witnesses testified that he "has been informed by the Indians that the French-Canadese Indians come within six score miles of the English factories. The French Indians come to Albany to trade for their heavy goods." He said he had heard Governor Norton say that the "French ran away with our trade." "If," continued this witness, Alexander Brown, "the trade was opened, the French would not intercept the Indians, since in that case the separate traders must have out-factories in the same manner the French have, which the Company have not." Upon being asked by Lord Strange if "in case those out-settlements were erected, whether the same trade could be carried on at the present settlements?" the witness replied that "it would be impossible, but that the trade would be extended, and by that means they would take it from the French. That if these settlements were near the French, they must have garrisons to secure them against the French, and the Indians who trade

French encroachment on trade.

* 1720.

with and are in friendship with them (whom he distinguished by the name of French Indians)."

Brown quoted Norton as saying, in the year 1739, "that the French had a settlement at about the distance of one hundred or six score miles from Churchill, which had been built about a year, and contained sixty men with small arms."

The result of the deliberations of the Committee of Enquiry was, on the whole, favourable to the Company. The charter was pronounced unassailable, and the Company had made out a good case against its enemies. It had certainly permitted the encroachments of the French. But the English Government of the day foresaw that French possession of Canada was doomed, and the Company could make ample amends when the British flag was unfurled at Quebec and at Montreal.

The Company having come out of the ordeal unharmed, * the Lords of Trade and Plantations thought it might as well settle in its own mind the precise territory claimed by the Company under its charter. The Company, on its part, was not forgetful that the French Government had not yet paid its little bill, which having been running for over sixty years, had now assumed comparatively gigantic proportions.

Accordingly the Lords of Trade and Plantations, on the 25th of July, 1750, addressed a letter to the Company, representing that "as it was for the benefit of the plantations that the limits or boundaries of the British Colonies on the Continent of America should be distinctly known, more particularly as they border on the settlements made by the French, or any foreign nation in America, their Lordships desired as exact an account as possible of the limits and boundaries of the territory granted to the Company, together with a chart or map thereof, and all the best accounts and vouchers they can obtain to support the same, and particularly, if any, or what settlements have been made by the English on the frontiers towards the lakes, and if any, or what

The Government asks the Company to define its territory.

* On June 28th, 1749, at a Company's meeting, an account was made of the cost of defending the Company's charter, upon the motion made in the House of Commons. It amounted in the whole to only £755 5s. 10d., exclusive of Sharpe, the Company solicitor's services.

encroachments have been made, and at what period, and to be exact in stating every particular in the history of whatever encroachments have been made, which may serve to place the proceedings in a true light, and confute any right which may at any time be founded upon them.

The Company replied, among other things, that the said Straits and Bays "are now so well known, that it is apprehended they stand in no need of any particular description than by the chart or map herewith delivered; and the limits or boundaries of the lands and countries lying round the same, comprised, as your memorialists conceive, in the same grant, are as follows, that is to say: all the lands lying on the east side or coast of the said Bay, and extending from the Bay eastward to the Atlantic Ocean and Davis' Strait, and the line hereafter mentioned as the east and south-eastern boundaries of the said Company's territories; and towards the north, all the lands that lie at the north end, or on the north side or coast of the said Bay, and extending from the Bay northwards to the utmost limits of the lands; then towards the North Pole; but where or how these lands terminate is hitherto unknown. And towards the west, all the lands that lie on the west side or coast of the said Bay, and extending from the said Bay westward to the utmost limits of those lands; but where or how these lands terminate to the westward is also unknown, though probably it will be found they terminate on the Great South Sea, and towards the south," they propose the line already set out by them, before and soon after the Treaty of Utrecht, stating that the Commissioners under that treaty were never able to bring the settlement of the said limits to a final conclusion; but they urged that the limits of the territories granted to them, and of the places appertaining to the French, should be settled upon the footing above mentioned.

Company's reply.

The Treaty of Utrecht stipulated that the French King should restore to Great Britain in full right forever, Hudson's Bay, the Straits, and all lands, rivers, coasts, etc., there situate. Further, that the Hudson's Bay Company be repaid their

losses by French hostile incursions and depredations in time of peace.

The Hudson's Bay Company now went farther and asked the Government to insist that no French vessel should be allowed to pass to the north or north-west of a line drawn from Grimington's Island and Cape Perdrix.

One of the most feasible plans of the Company's foes seemed to be to get hold of some adjacent territory, and from that vantage ground gradually encroach on the chartered preserves. Such seems to have been the scheme in July, 1752, when a petition was presented to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, from "several London Merchants," who sought a grant of "all that part of America lying on the Atlantic Ocean on the east part, extending south and north from 52° north latitude from the equinoctial line to 60° of the same north latitude, called Labradore or New Britain, not at this time possessed by any of his Majesty's subjects or the subjects of any Christian prince or state."

On the receipt of this petition by the Government, the Hudson's Bay Company was called upon to say whether it laid claim to this tract. In their reply the Honourable Adventurers referred to the grant of Charles II. of all rights to trade and commerce of those seas, etc., within entrance of Hudson's Straits, and of all lands on the coasts and confines thereof; Labrador throughout its whole extent, from 60° north latitude to 52°, was therefore alleged to be within their limits.

The Company was already settled there, and had spent £10,000 on it. Moreover, declared the Company, it was a barren land, with few beavers or other furs of value.

The Company suggested that the "London Merchants'" aim was to gain a footing and draw off the Hudson's Bay Company's trade, which it hoped would not be permitted. This hope of the Adventurers was realized, for the petition of the London Merchants was not allowed.*

* In refusing to advise the granting of a charter to the Company's enemies, the Attorney-General, Sir Dudley Ryder, and the Solicitor-General, Sir William Murray—afterwards Lord Mansfield—drew up a lengthy and important paper, reviewing the charges against the Company. Their conclusion was that either the charges were "not sufficiently supported in point of fact, or were in great measure accounted for from the nature and circumstances of the case." They deemed the charter valid for all practical purposes.

France's fatal hour with respect to her sovereignty over Canada rapidly approached. In December, 1759, the Company wrote as follows to the Lords of Plantations :—

In prospect of an approaching Treaty of Peace between this nation and France, and in the hope that the great success his Majesty's arms have been blessed with, and the many acquisitions that have been thereby gained from the enemy, will enable his Majesty to secure to your memorialists satisfaction for the injuries and depredations they have long since suffered from the French, which stands acknowledged by treaty and are stipulated to be made satisfaction for, but through the perfidy of the enemy, and in disregard of the treaty have hitherto remained unsatisfy'd; in which the honour of the nation as well as justice to the individuals, loudly call for redress.

Halifax and Soame Jenyns thereupon wrote to Pitt in these words:

Sir,—The Governor and Company of Merchants trading to Hudson's Bay having presented a memorial to us, stating their claims with respect to limits and other matters provided for by the Treaty of Utrecht, and praying that in case of a peace with France, his Majesty would be graciously pleased to cause satisfaction to be made to them with respect to such claims, pursuant to the stipulations of the tenth and eleventh articles of the said treaty; we beg leave to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the said memorial for his Majesty's directions thereupon.

While England went mad with joy over Wolfe's victory at Quebec, the Company thought the time had, at last, come when the indemnity it claimed so long should be exacted in the treaty of peace which could not be long delayed. But its sanguine expectations were not destined to be realized. In vain did the Governor wait at the door of Mr. Secretary Pitts; in vain did Lord Halifax assure the Company's secretary that he would make it his own personal business to have the affair attended to. It was too late in the day.* With reason might

Conquest of Canada.

* The Company being apprehensive that Mr. Secretary Pitts' indisposition should deprive them of an opportunity of conferring with him in due time, with respect to the Company's claim on the French nation for depredations in times of peace before the Treaty of Utrecht, resolved that a petition should be drawn up to his Majesty, humbly representing such losses and damages, reciting the tenth and eleventh article of the said treaty, and praying that his Majesty will give his plenipotentiaries at the approaching congress for a treaty of peace, such directions as will suffice for justice being done to the Company by compensation for such losses. Also that the boundaries of Hudson's Bay may be settled."—*Minute Book*, May 20th, 1761.

the Company's zealous secretary trace in the minutes: "Locked up this day (November 22nd, 1759), in the Great Iron Chest, a Book containing estimates of the Company's losses sustained from the French, from 1682 to 1688."

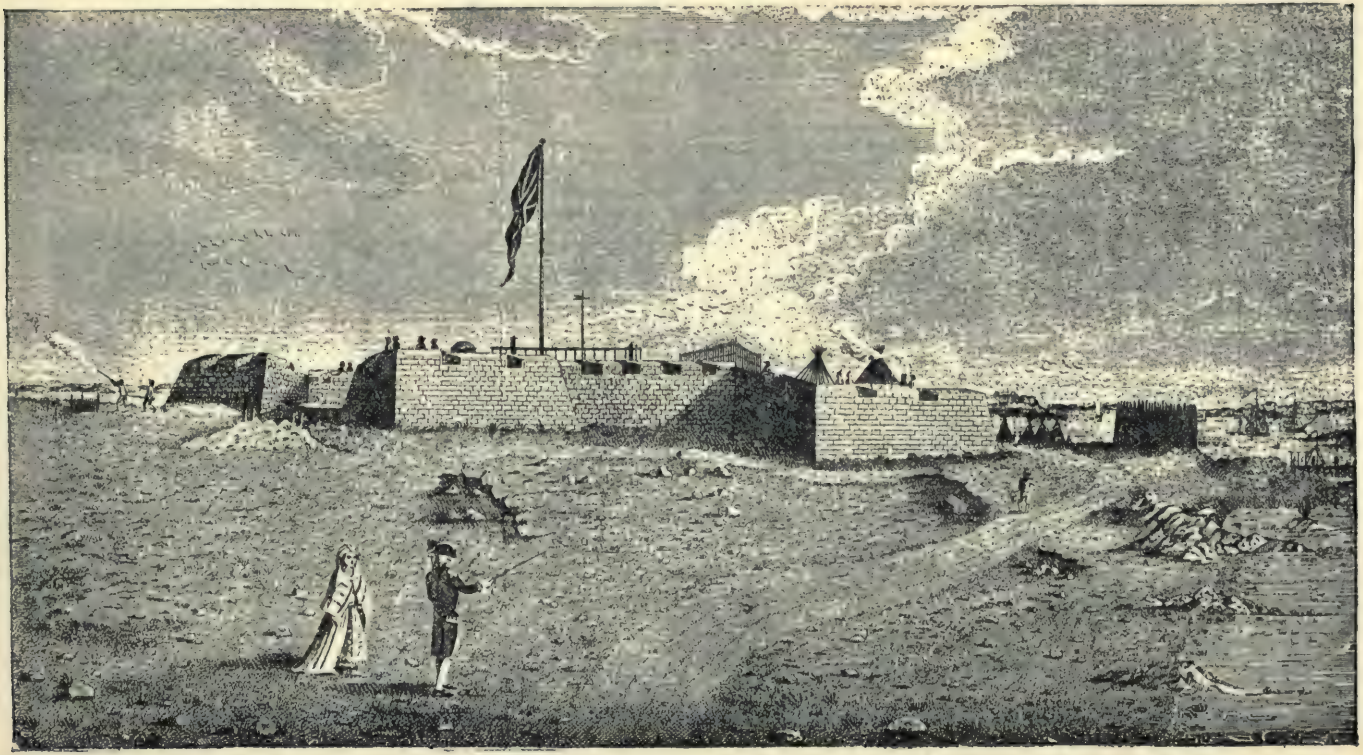
The "Great Iron Chest" was to hold the book for many a day, and though the Company evinced a never-failing alacrity to produce it, yet never was there to be inscribed the words "settled with thanks," at the foot of this "little bill against the French."

We have already been made familiar with the character of the Company's forts in the Bay so late as the reign of Queen Anne. There had been almost from the beginning a party amongst the Honourable Adventurers favourable to the erection of strong forts, not built of logs with bastions of stone, but of stone throughout, from the designs of competent engineers.

A few years after the Company had regained possession of York Factory, it built (1718) a wooden fort at Churchill River, to which was given the name of Prince of Wales. In 1730 it constructed another at Moose River; and about the same time a small post, capable of containing eight or ten men at Slude River, on the East Main. In 1720 Henley House, one hundred and fifty miles up Albany River, was built to contain a garrison of eight men, as a check to the Indians who carried on a trade with the French.

But the wooden fort Prince of Wales did not remain long. The remembrance of their former posts destroyed by fire, and Iberville's cannon, caused the Company at length to undertake the fortification on a splendid scale of its best harbour, to safeguard what it designed to be its principal *entrepôt* from the French, as well as from the Indians. Opposition was cried down, and the "fortification party," as it was called, carried the day. A massive thirty-feet wide foundation was begun at Churchill, from the plans of military engineers who had served under Marlborough, and, after many vicissitudes, in 1734 Fort Prince of Wales, one of the strongest forts on the continent, was reared at the mouth of Churchill River.

Building of stone forts.



FORT PRINCE OF WALES.

It was the original intention to have the walls forty-two feet thick at their foundation, but on account of the Governor's interference the dimensions were reduced to twenty-five. It was afterwards found, however, that there was a tendency to sink when cannon were fired frequently from the walls, so one section was forthwith pulled down and rebuilt according to original plans. Three of the bastions had arches for storehouses, forty feet three inches by ten feet, and in the fourth was built a stone magazine twenty-four feet long and ten feet wide in the clear, with a passage to it through the gorge of the bastion twenty-four feet long and four feet wide.

The parapets were originally constructed of wood, supplied by denuding the old fort, situated five miles up the Churchill River, the site of which was first occupied in 1688; but in 1746 the Company began erecting a stone parapet. Robson's plan shows that two houses, a dwelling and office building, were erected inside the fort, and incidentally he describes one of the two as being one hundred and eighty-one feet six inches by thirty-three feet, with side walls seventeen feet high and the roof covered with lead.

In 1730 Moose, a new fort, was erected on the site of Moose Factory. About the same time Richmond Fort was built on Whale River, but it did not continue a great many years. I find, under date of 21st December, 1758, that "the Governor represented to the Committee that Richmond Fort did not give a sufficient return to pay the most moderate charge of supporting it," and it was "resolved that the Company's servants and effects be withdrawn from there as soon as conveniently may be and replaced at such of the Company's other factories as shall be found needful." Further, it was "resolved that a factory with accommodation for twelve men, with all convenience for trading goods stores, and provisions, be built as early as possible in the year 1760, in the most convenient place for that purpose on the north side of Severn River and as high up as may be."

At the same time it was ordered that the number of men for York Fort and the new settlement to be made on the Severn River should be forty-eight men.

Clandestine trade was a constantly recurring feature of eighteenth century life in the Bay. Charges were repeatedly preferred against the Company's servants, and altogether scores were dismissed as a punishment for this offence. It must be confessed that there was often a temptation difficult to resist. Nothing seemed more natural for the poor apprentice to trade his jack-knife, Jew's-harp or silk kerchief with an Indian or Esquimau for a peltry; and the only reason, perhaps, why private bartering was not indulged in more generally was the certainty of detection. But with the Governors and traders and ship captains, risk was reduced to a minimum.

Clandestine trade.

One of the most unfortunate examples was the case of Captain Coats. This able mariner had been in the employ of the Company for a period of many years. None was superior to him in knowledge of the Bay and straits. Captain Coats had been twice shipwrecked, once in 1727, "when near the meridian of Cape Farewell, when running through the ice with a small sail, when two pieces of ice shutt upon us and sank our ship"; and again in 1736, when he was entangled in the ice off Cape Resolution, when his ship had her sides crushed in and sank in twenty minutes. Coats drew up a journal for the use of his sons, containing an elaborate description of the Bay and its approaches, together with a great deal of relative matter; and this journal, which has received the honour of publication by the Hakluyt Society, concludes by saying that if these sons are neglected by the Hudson's Bay Company they are at liberty, and "it is his will and command that every part be made publick, for the use and benefit of mankind."

There is herein, it is almost needless to say, no mention of the captain's clandestine trading operations, which extended over a long series of years, and which might never have been made known to the Company had it not been for the sudden death of Pilgrim, who was formerly governor at Prince of Wales and Moose Fort. A number of private letters and papers reached England, incriminating Coats, but they

never reached the public; nor in 1752, were the Hakluyt Society cognisant of the fate which overtook their author. "Of the writer," remarks Sir John Barrow, who edited the volume, "the editor can learn but little; nothing, in fact, is now known of Captain Coats, except that he was in the Company's service as commander of one or other of their ships from 1727 to 1751." He added that the memorial was believed to exist in the Company's archives.

Under date of November 28th, 1751, I find the following: "The Governor having acquainted the Committee of this affair, and laid the letters and papers before them, they were fully examined and the contents thereof considered." Coats was then called in and told of the information they had received, and the cause they had to suspect that he had defrauded the Company by carrying on a clandestine trade greatly to their prejudice and contrary to the fidelity he owed the Company.

Coats at first endeavoured to excuse himself, but finding the proofs contained in the letter papers (many of which were in his own handwriting and signature) so strong in evidence against him, at last owned he was guilty of the offence he was accused of and submitted himself to the Company, and he was ordered to withdraw while his case was considered. At the expiration of two hours the culprit was called in and acquainted with his sentence, which was dismissal from the service. He was ordered to deliver up the keys of the *King George*, of which he was commander, together with the stores and the keys of such stores in the warehouse in his custody belonging to the Company."

Case of Capt. Coats.

The disgraced captain went home, and after a miserable existence of some weeks, ended his life by his own hand. On the 20th of February, there is a letter to the Company from his widow, Mary Coats, which was read out to the Adventurers assembled. It prayed that the Committee would "indulge her so far as to order the balance that shall appear upon her late husband's account to be paid, and to

permit her to have the stores brought home, still remaining in the *King George;* the profit of these, urged the widow, had always been enjoyed by every master in the Company's services." Moved by the appeal, Widow Coats was called in and informed that provided she delivered up to the Company all the books, papers, charts or drafts belonging to her late husband and now in her custody, she might expect to meet with the favour of the Company. "For which she returned thanks and promised to comply therewith." But the Hakluyt Society's publication of Coats' journal is sufficient to show that his widow did not keep to the strict letter of her word.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

1763–1770.

Effect of the Conquest on the Fur-trade of the French—Indians again Seek the Company's Factories—Influx of Highlanders into Canada —Alexander Henry—Mystery Surrounding the *Albany* Cleared Up—Astronomers Visit Prince of Wales' Fort—Strike of Sailors—Seizure of Furs—Measures to Discourage Clandestine Trade.

The conquest of Canada by the English in 1760* had an almost instantaneous effect upon the fur-trade of the French. The system of licenses was swept away with the *régime* of Intendants of New France. The posts which, established chiefly for purposes of trade, were yet military, came to be abandoned, and the officers who directed them turned their

* France ceded to England "Canada with all its dependencies," reserving only such part of what had been known as Canada as lay west of the Mississippi. The watershed between the Missouri and the Mississippi rivers had been the boundary between Canada and Louisiana when both were owned by France, and by the treaty of 1763 the River Mississippi was agreed to as the future boundary between the English and French possessions in that quarter; the language of the treaty being, "that the confines between [France and England] in that part of the world shall be fixed irrevocably by a line drawn along the middle of the River Mississippi from its source [etc.], to the sea." Very soon after this treaty, viz., on 7th October, 1763, the Province of Quebec was erected by Royal Proclamation, but the Province as then constituted took in very little of what was afterwards Upper Canada and what is now Ontario; the most north-westerly point was Lake Nipissing; the whole of the territory adjacent to the great lakes was excluded. In 1774 the boundaries of Quebec were enlarged by the Quebec Act. That Act recited that "by the arrangements made by the said Royal Proclamation a very large extent of territory, within which were several colonies and settlements of subjects of France, who claimed to remain therein under the faith of the said treaty, was left without any provision being made for the administration of civil government therein." The Act, therefore, provided that "all the territories, islands and countries in North America belonging to the Crown of Great Britain, bounded on the south by a line" therein described, "from the Bay of Chaleurs to the River Ohio, and along the bank of the said river, westward, to the banks of the Mississippi, and northward to the southern boundary of the territory granted to the Merchants-Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay," etc., "be, and they are hereby, during His Majesty's pleasure, annexed to and made part and parcel of the Province of Quebec as created and established by the said Royal Proclamation of the 7th October, 1763."

disconsolate faces towards France, or to other lands where the flag of the lily still waved. The English colonies were not devoid of diligent traders ready to pursue their calling advantageously: but they shrank from penetrating a country where the enemy might yet lurk, a country of whose approaches, and of whose aspect or inhabitants they knew nothing and feared everything. As for the Indians themselves, they, for a time, awaited patiently the advent of the French trader. Spring came and found them at the deserted posts. They sought but they could not find; "their braves called loudly, but the sighing trees alone answered their call." Despair at first filled the bosoms of the Red men when they found that all their winter's toil and hardships in the forest and over the trail had been in vain. They waited all summer, and then, as the white trader came not, wearily they took up their burdens and began their journey anew.

Effect of the Conquest.

For a wise Indian had appeared amongst them, and he had said: "Fools, why do you trust these white traders who come amongst you with beads, and fire-water and crucifixes? They are but as the crows that come and are gone. But there are traders on the banks of the great lake yonder who are never absent, neither in our time nor in the time of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers. They are like the rock which cannot be moved, and they give good goods and plenty, and always the same. If you are wise you will go hence and deal with them, and never trust more the traders who are like fleas and grasshoppers—here one minute and flown away the next."

More than one factor of the Company heard and told of this oft-spoken harangue, and many there lived to testify to its effect upon the assembled Indians. Not even was it forgotten or disregarded years afterwards in the height of the prosperity of the Northmen, whose arts of suasion were exercised in vain to induce the Red man to forego his journey to York, Churchill or Cumberland.

"No," they would say, "we trade with our friends, as our grandfathers did. Our fathers once waited for the French and Bostonians to come to their forts, and they lay down and

died, and their squaws devoured them, waiting still. You are here to-day, but will you be here to-morrow? No, we are going to trade with the Company."

And so they pressed on, resisting temptation, wayward, though loyal, enduring a long and rough journey that they might deal with their friends.

Thus for some years the Company prospered, and did a more thriving business than ever. But before, however, dealing with the new *régime*, let us turn for a moment to the Canadian bushrangers and voyageurs thus cut off from their homes and abandoned by their officers and employers. Their occupation was gone—whither did they drift? Too long had they led the untrammelled life of the wilderness to adjust again the fetters of a civilized life in Montreal or Quebec; they were attached to their brave and careless masters; these in many instances they were permitted to follow; but large numbers dispersed themselves amongst the Indians. Without capital they could no longer follow the fur-trade; they were fond of hunting and fishing; and so by allying themselves with Indian wives, and by following the pursuits and adopting the customs of the Red men, themselves became virtually savages, completely severed from their white fellows.

The "coureurs de bois."

But an influx of Scotch Highlanders had been taking place in Canada ever since 1745, and some of these bold spirits were quick to see the advantages of prosecuting, without legal penalty, a private trade in furs. To these were added English soldiers, who were discharged at the peace, or had previously deserted. How many of these were slain by the aborigines, and never more heard of, can never be computed; but it is certain that many more embarked in the fur-trade and fell victims to the tomahawk, torch, hunger and disease than there is any record of.

It is certain, also, that the hostility of the tribes, chief amongst them the Iroquois, to the English, was very great, and this hostility was nourished for some years by the discontented bushrangers and voyageurs. In the action of Pontiac at Detroit, and the surprise and capture of Michilimackinac

Hostility of the Indians to the English.



A Blackfoot Brave.

(Drawn by Edmund Morris, after photo.)

with its attendant horrors, there is ample proof, both of the spirit animating the Indians, and the danger which went hand in hand with the new trade in furs.

The first of these English traders at Michilimackinac to penetrate into the west, where the French had gone, is said to be Thomas Curry. This man, having by shrewdness and ability procured sufficient capital for the purpose, engaged guides and interpreters, purchased a stock of goods and provisions, and with four canoes reached Fort Bourbon, which was situated at the western extremity of Cedar Lake, on the waters of the Saskatchewan. His venture was successful, and he returned to Montreal with his canoes loaded with fine furs. But he never expressed a desire to repeat the performance, although it was not long before his example was followed by many others. James Finlay was the first of these ; he penetrated to Nipawee, the last of the French posts on the Saskatchewan, in latitude 53½, and longitude 103. This trader was equally successful.

After a career of some years in the vicinity of Michilimackinac, of a general character, identical with that pursued a hundred years before by Groseilliers, another intrepid trader, Alexander Henry, decided to strike off into the North-West. He left "the Sault," as Sault Ste. Marie was called, on the 10th of June, 1775, with goods and provisions to the value of £3,000 sterling, on board twelve small canoes and four larger ones. Each small canoe was navigated by three men, and each larger one by four. On the 20th they encamped at the mouth of the Pijitic. It was by this river, he tells us, that the French ascended in 1750, when they plundered one of the Company's factories in the bay, and carried off the two small pieces of brass cannon, which fell again into English hands at Michilimackinac. But here Henry fell into error ; for it was by the River Michipicoten that the French went, and the factory plundered of its adornments was Moose, not Churchill, and the year 1756, not 1750.

Henry's expedition.

Henry himself was going on a sort of plundering expedi-

tion against the Company, which was to be far more effective in setting an example to others, than any the French had yet carried through. Everywhere as he passed along there were evidences of the recent French occupation.

To return to 1767, this year had witnessed a clearing up of the mystery surrounding the fate of the *Albany*, the first of the vessels sent by the Company to search for a north-west passage.



ALEXANDER HENRY.

The Company was at that time carrying on a black whale fishery, and Marble Island was made the rendezvous, not merely on account of the commodious harbour, but because of the greater abundance of whales there. Under these circumstances the boats, when on the lookout for fish, had frequent occasion to row close to the island, which led to the dis-

covery, at the easternmost extremity, of a new harbour.* Upon landing at this place, the crews made a startling discovery. They found English guns, anchors, cables, bricks, a smith's anvil, and many other articles lying on the ground, which, though they were very old, had not been defaced by the hand of time, and which having been apparently without use to the native Esquimaux, and too heavy to be removed by them, had not been removed from the spot where they had originally been laid a little farther inland. The whalers beheld the remains of a frame house,† which, though half destroyed by the Esquimaux for the wood and iron, yet could plainly be seen at a distance. Lastly, when the tide ebbed in the harbour there became visible the hulls of two craft, lying sunk in five fathoms of water. The figurehead of one of these vessels, together with the guns and other implements, was shortly afterwards carried to England. The hypothesis of Governor Norton was instantly and only too correctly espoused by the Company. On this inhospitable island, where neither stick nor stump was, nor is to be seen, and which lies sixteen miles from a mainland, no less inhospitable, perished Knight, Barlow, and the other members of the exploring expedition of 1719. Thus was a fate nearly half a century in the balance ascertained at last.

Fate of the "Albany."

Two years later some members of a whaling party landed at this same harbour, and one of their number, perceiving some aged Esquimaux, determined to question them on the matter.

"This," says the narrator, "we were the better enabled to do by the assistance of an Esquimau, who was then in the

* It is not a little singular that neither Middleton, Ellis, Christopher, Johnston nor Garbet, all of which explorers had visited Marble Island prior to 1767, and some of them often, ever discovered this harbour. The actual discoverer was Joseph Stephens, commanding the *Success*, a small vessel employed in the whale fishery. Two years later Stephens was given the command of the *Charlotte*, a fine brig of 100 tons, his mate then being Samuel Hearne, the explorer.

† "I have seen," wrote Governor Hearne, "the remains of those houses several times; they are on the west side of the harbour, and in all probability will be discernible for many years to come."

Company's service as a linguist, and annually sailed in one of their vessels in that character. The account received from these aged natives was 'full, clear and unreserved,' and its purport was in this wise:

"When the doomed vessels arrived at Marble Island, it was late in the autumn of 1719, and in making the harbour through the ice, the larger was considerably damaged. The party landed safely, however, and at once set about building the house. As soon as the ice permitted, in the following summer, the Esquimaux paid them a further visit, and observed that the white strangers were largely reduced in number and that the survivors were very unhealthy in appearance. According to the account given by these Esquimaux, these were very busily employed, but the nature of their employment they could not easily describe. It is probable they were lengthening the long-boat or repairing the ship, and to support this conjecture, forty-eight years later there lay, at a little distance from the house, a quantity of oak chips, 'most assuredly made by carpenters.'"

Much havoc must have been thenceforward wrought among the explorers, who could not repair their ship, which even may by this time have been sunk; and by the second winter, only twenty souls out of fifty remained.

That same winter, some of the Esquimaux had taken up their abode on the opposite side of the harbour to the English, and frequently supplied them with such provisions as they had, which consisted chiefly of whale's blubber, seal's flesh and train oil. When the spring advanced, the natives crossed over to the mainland, and upon visiting Marble Island in the summer of 1721 found only five of the white men alive, and those in such distress that they instantly seized upon and devoured the seal's flesh and whale blubber, given them in trade by their visitors, in a raw state. This occasioned a severe physical disorder which destroyed three of the five; and the other two, though very weak made shift to bury their dead comrades. These two survivors eked out a wretched existence for many weeks, frequently resorting to

Wretched death of Knight and his men.

the summit of an adjacent rock, in the vain hope of being seen by some relief party. But alas, they were doomed to a daily disappointment; the Esquimaux themselves had little to offer them; and at last they were seen by the wandering natives to crouch down close together and cry aloud like children, the tears rolling down their cheeks. First one of the pair died, and then the other, in an attempt to dig a grave for his fellow. The Esquimau who told the story, led the whalers to the spot and showed them the skulls and the larger bones of the luckless pair, then lying above ground not a great distance from the dwelling. It is believed that the last survivor must have been the armourer or smith of the expedition, because according to the account given by the aborigines, he was always employed in working iron into implements for them, some of which they could still show.

There flourished in 1768 the body known as the "Royal Society for Improving Natural Knowledge." This society wrote to the Company, requesting that two persons might be conveyed to and from Fort Churchill in Hudson's Bay, in some of the Company's ships, "to observe the passage of Venus over the sun, which will happen on the 3rd of June, 1769." It was desired that these persons might be maintained by the Company, and furnished with all necessary articles while on board and on shore. The Company was asked to furnish them with materials and the assistance of servants to erect an observatory; the Society engaging to recoup the Company's whole charge, and desiring an estimate of the expense.

Astronomers at Hudson's Bay, 1769.

The Company expressed itself as "ready to convey the persons desired, with their baggage and instruments, to and from Fort Churchill, and to provide them with lodging and medicine while there, *gratis*, they to find their own bedding." The Company demanded £250 for diet during the absence of the astronomers from England, which would be about eighteen months. The Adventurers recommended the Society to send the intended building in frame, with all necessary implements, tools, etc., which "will be conveyed upon freight, the Royal Society likewise paying for any clothing that may

be supplied the observers during their residence in Hudson's Bay."

It is interesting to record that the expedition was entirely successful. The two astronomers went out to Prince of Wales' Fort, and returned in the *Prince Rupert*, after having witnessed the transit of Venus on the 3rd of June, 1769.

Towards the middle of the century there had grown up a deep prejudice and opposition towards the Hudson's Bay Company from the sailors and watermen who frequented the Thames.

It was alleged that the Company did nothing to make itself popular; its rules were strict and its wages to seamen were low, albeit it had never suffered very much from this prejudice until the return of the Middleton expedition. Many absurd stories became current as to the Company's policy and the life led by the servants at the factories. These travellers' tales had been thoroughly threshed out by the enquiry of 1749. The opponents of the Company had told their "shocking narratives." It was only natural, perhaps, that these should be passed about from mouth to mouth, and so become exaggerated beyond bounds. Upon the discharge and death of Captain Coats a demonstration against the Company had been talked of at Wapping and Gravesend, but nothing came of it but a few hootings and bawlings as the ships sailed away on their annual voyages to the Bay.

By 1768, however, the dissatisfaction had spread to the Company's own seamen, and now took an active form. The time was well chosen by the malcontents, because the public were ready at that time to sympathize with the movement for the amelioration of the conditions which characterized the merchant service generally.

The Company's seamen strike.

A numerous body of seamen forcibly entered the Company's ships in the River Thames, demanding that wages should be raised to 40s. per month. They struck the topgallant masts and yards, and lowered the lower yards close down, and got them in fore and aft. The consequence was that the crews

of the Company's ships and brigantine were compelled to quit their vessels.

The moment the tidings of this reached the Governor and Company it was deemed advisable for the Deputy Governor, Thomas Berens and James Fitzgerald, Esquires, to "attend his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, and such other gentlemen in the Administration as they shall find necessary, and represent the urgent situation of the Company's affairs in general."

This was done forthwith, and the facts of the situation placed before Viscount Weymouth and Sir Edward Hawke First Lord of the Admiralty.

Secretary of State Weymouth appeared well disposed to do all the service in his power to redress the present grievances; that a memorial should be presented on the Company's behalf.

While the memorial was being drawn up, the three captains acquainted the Commissioners that under the present disturbances on the River Thames, they should not be able to secure the seamen they had already got, without allowing their sailors 40s. per month. It was then the 18th of May, and the Company considered that the lives of its servants abroad, and the event of the intended voyage, would not admit of delay. They therefore told their three captains, and the master of the *Charlotte*, brigantine, that they would allow the sailors 35s. per month from their respective entries to this day, inclusive, and 40s. per month from this day for their voyage out and home.

Hardly had this been done than a letter was received expressing Lord Weymouth's great concern on being informed that the Company's ships had been prevented from sailing until a promise was made to raise the seamen's wages, and that some acts of violence had been committed to effect their purpose. From the strong assurance his Lordship had received that there was no danger of any obstacle to delay the voyages, he was almost ready to doubt the rumour.

Berens called on Weymouth and informed him that the Company's critical situation had already obliged the Company

to acquiesce in the demand of 40s. per month for the seamen's wages. No acts of violence were committed on board the Company's ship, other than that the crews were daily forced against their inclination to join the rioters.

The ships were at length got down to Greenwich and proceeded on their voyage with despatch.

But the Company was not yet out of the wood. Clandestine trade was to be again its bogey. The disaffection had been temporarily arrested amongst the sailors: but they were hardly prepared to learn that it extended to the captains themselves, who had, however, the best of reasons for concealing their feelings. When the ships came home in the following year the Company received information that a seizure of furs and other valuable goods brought from Hudson's Bay had been made since the arrival of the Company's ships that season. Communication was entered into with the Commissioners of Customs requesting a particular account of such seizures either from the Company's ships or other places, "in order that the Commissioners may pursue an enquiry for detecting the frauds that have been committed to the prejudice of His Majesty's Revenue and the interest of the Company."

Clandestine trade by the Company's captains.

Suspicion for the loss of numerous packages of furs now began to fasten itself upon one of the Company's captains, Horner of the *Seahorse*. Horner acknowledged that he was not altogether ignorant that the furs had been abstracted from the hold of his ship. The Company deliberated on his case, and it was "unanimously resolved that the said John Horner be discharged from the Company's service." The other captains were now called in and acquainted with the reasons for Captain Horner's discharge. The Adventurers declared their determination to make the like public example of all persons who should be found to be concerned in clandestine trade.

In the following year the Company came to a wise decision. Taking into consideration the state of its trade and the many

frauds that "have been practised and detected," it was concluded that such frauds were connived at by the Company's chief factors and captains, who were not only privy thereto, but in consideration for some joint interest, permitted this illicit trade to be carried on.

The Company seems to have thought that the chief factors and captains might have been tempted to these nefarious practices by the smallness of their respective salaries, and therefore in the hope of securing their fidelity and encouraging diligence and industry, and the extending of the Company's trade to the utmost to the benefit of the Company and the revenue, it was decided that a salary of £130 per annum be allowed the chief factors at York, Albany, and Prince of Wales' Fort; also the factors about to be appointed at Moose Fort and Severn House, "in lieu of former salaries, and all trapping gratuities, and perquisites whatever, except a servant, which is to be allowed to them as before."

Salaries increased.

A gratuity was to be given to all chief factors of three shillings upon every score of made beaver which they consigned and "which shall actually be brought home to the Company's account."

To the captains a gratuity was decreed of one shilling and sixpence per score of made beaver which they should bring to the Company's warehouse in good saleable condition.

To prevent any loss from rioters or dissatisfied sailors the Company decided, in 1770, to insure their ships and goods for the first time in its history. The secretary made enquiries at the London Assurance Office, and reported that the premium would be five per cent. per annum on each ship during their being in dock, or on the River Thames above Gravesend; and the same on the ships' stores while they continued in the Company's warehouse at Ratcliff. Whereupon the Company insured each of its three ships for £2,000, and the ships' stores in the above warehouse for £3,000.

CHAPTER XXV.

1768–1773.

Reports of the "Great River"—Company despatch Samuel Hearne on a Mission of Discovery—Norton's Instructions—Saluted on his Departure from the Fort—First and Second Journeys—Matonabee—Results of the Third Journey—The Company's Servants in the Middle of the Century—Death of Governor Norton.

Some northern Indians, who came to trade at Prince of Wales' Fort in the spring of 1768, brought further accounts of the "Great River," as they persisted in calling it, and also produced several pieces of copper, as specimens of a mine long believed by the traders to exist in the vicinity. This determined Governor Norton to represent it to the Company as a matter well worthy their attention. As he went that year to England, he was given the opportunity of doing so in person; and in consequence of his representations, the Committee resolved to despatch an intelligent person by land to observe the latitude and longitude of the river's mouth, and to make a chart of the country traversed, with such observations as might lead to a better knowledge of the region. An intelligent mariner, Samuel Hearne, then in the Company's employ as mate of the brig *Charlotte*, was selected for the mission.*

The "Great River."

* From the good opinion we entertain of you, and Mr. Norton's recommendation, we have agreed to raise your wages to £130 per annum for two years, and have placed you in our council at Prince of Wales' Fort; and we should have been ready to advance you to the command of the *Charlotte*, according to your request, if a matter of more immediate consequence had not intervened.

Mr. Norton has proposed an inland journey, far to the north of Churchill, to promote an extension of our trade, as well as for the discovery of a north-west passage, copper mines, etc.; and as an undertaking of this nature requires the attention of a person capable of taking an observation for determining the longitude and latitude and also distances, and the course of rivers and their depths, we have fixed upon you

Before starting on his journey in 1769, Hearne received full instructions from Moses Norton, the Governor. He was provided with an escort and was urged to cultivate, as he went, friendly relations with the Indians. "Smoke your calumet of peace with their leaders in order to establish a friendship with them." He was equipped with instruments, and was required to take account of latitude and longitude of the chief points visited; he was to seek for a north-west passage through the continent. But a more immediate and practical matter was dwelt upon in his letter. "Be careful to observe what mines are near the river,* what water there is at the river's mouth, how far the woods are from the seaside, the course of the river, the nature of the soil, and the productions of it; and make any other remarks that you may think will be either necessary or satisfactory. And if the said river be likely to be of any utility, take possession of it on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company by cutting your name on some of the rocks, and also the date of the year, month, etc."

Hearne's expedition of discovery.

Hearne promised to follow these instructions implicitly, and soon after daybreak on the morning of the 6th of November, the occupants of the fort assembled to witness the intrepid explorer's departure. A salute of seven guns and a

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(especially as it is represented to us to be your own inclination) to conduct this journey with proper assistants.

We therefore hope you will second our expectations in readily performing this service, and upon your return we shall willingly make you any acknowledgment suitable to your trouble therein.

We highly approve of your going in the *Speedwell* to assist in the whale-fishery last year, and heartily wish you health and success in the present expedition.

We remain your loving friends,

Bibye Lake, Deputy Governor.	James Winter Lake.
John Anthony Merle.	Herman Berens.
Robert Merry.	Joseph Sparrel.
Samuel Wegg.	James FitzGerald.

* "No man," says Hearne, "either English or Indian, ever found a bit of copper in that country to the south of the seventy-first degree of latitude, unless it had been accidentally dropped by some of the far northern Indians on their way to the Company's factory."

ringing cheer thrice repeated was responded to by Hearne, already on his way, with a wave of his cap.

He had not gone far, however, when dissatisfaction broke out amongst his party. First one Indian guide deserted him and then another; but trusting to the fidelity of the rest



DOBBS' MAP, 1744.

Hearne pressed forward. At last, nearly the whole party left him, taking at the same time several bags of powder and shot, his hatchets, chisels and files. His chief guide, Chaw-chin-ahaw, now advised the explorer to return, and announced his own intention of travelling to his own tribe in the south-west.

"Thus," says Hearne, "they set out, making the woods ring with their laughter, and left us to consider our unhappy situation, nearly two hundred miles from Prince of Wales' Fort, all heavily laden, and in strength and spirits greatly reduced by hunger and fatigue."

Mortifying as the prospect of return was, it was inevitable. They arrived on the 11th of December, to the astonishment of Norton and the Company's servants.

But Hearne was not to be daunted. On the 23rd of February he again set out with five Indians. This time his journey was a succession of short stages, with intervals of a whole day's rest between. These intervals were occupied in killing deer, or in seeking for fish under the ice with nets. On one occasion they spent a day in building a more permanent tent, where they waited for the flights of goose to appear.

Second expedition.

The course had been in a general north-western direction from the Churchill River, but on the 10th of June the party abandoned the rivers and lakes and struck out into the barren lands. The following narrative by Hearne is interesting, because up to that moment no servant of the Company had ever seen a live musk ox, that "now rare denizen of the northern solitudes."

"We had not walked above seven or eight miles before we saw three musk oxen grazing by the side of a small lake. The Indians immediately went in pursuit of them, and as some were expert hunters they soon killed the whole of them. This was, no doubt, very fortunate, but to our great mortification before we could get one of them skinned, such a fall of rain came on as to put it out of our power to make a fire, which, even in the finest weather, could only be made of moss, as we were nearly a hundred miles from any woods. This was poor comfort for people who had not broken their fast for four or five days. Necessity, however, has no law, and having before been initiated into the method of eating raw meat, we were the better prepared for this repast. But this was by no means so well relished, either by me or the Southern Indians,

as either raw venison or raw fish had been; for the flesh of the musk-ox is not only coarse and tough, but smells and tastes so strong of musk as to make it very disagreeable when raw, though it is tolerable eating when properly cooked. The weather continued so remarkably bad, accompanied with constant heavy rain, snow and sleet, and our necessities were so great by the time the weather permitted us to make a fire, that we had nearly eaten to the amount of one buffalo quite raw."

What severities of hardship were endured by our traveller may be judged from his description. "We have fasted many times," he declares, "two whole days and nights; twice upwards of three days, and once, while at Shethaunee, near seven days, during which we tasted not a mouthful of anything except a few cranberries, water, scraps of old leather and burnt bones. On these pressing occasions I have frequently seen the Indians examine their wardrobe, which consisted chiefly of skin clothing, and consider what part could best be spared; sometimes a piece of an old, half-rotten deerskin, and others a pair of old shoes, were sacrificed to alleviate extreme hunger."

Hardships of the journey.

It was while in the midst of these sufferings and bitter experiences, which required all the traveller's courage to endure that a disaster of a different order happened. It was the 11th of August. Hearne had reached a point some five hundred miles north-west of Churchill. It proving rather windy at noon, although otherwise fine, he had let his valuable quadrant stand, in order to obtain the latitude more exactly by two altitudes. He then retired to eat his mid-day meal. Suddenly he was startled by a crash, and looking in the direction, found that a gust of wind had overturned the instrument and sent it crashing to earth. As the ground where it stood was very stony, the bubble, sight-vane and vernier were entirely broken to pieces, and the instrument thus destroyed. In consequence of this misfortune, the traveller resolved to retrace his steps wearily back to Prince of Wales' Fort.

When he had arrived at Churchill River he had met the friendly chief, Matonabee,* who at once, and with charming simplicity, volunteered a reason for the troubles which had overtaken the white explorer. He had taken no women with him on his journey. Said Matonabee:

"When all the men are heavy-laden they can neither hunt nor travel to any considerable distance; and in case they meet with success in hunting, who is to carry the product of their labour? Women," added he, "were made for labour; one of them carry or haul as much as two men can do. They also pitch our tents, make and mend our clothing, keep up our fires at night, and, in fact, there is no such thing as travelling any considerable distance, or for any length of time, in this country, without their assistance. Women," he observed again, "though they do everything, are maintained at a trifling expense, for as they always act as cooks, the very licking of their fingers in scarce times is sufficient for their subsistence."

The Indian's estimate of woman.

Hearne did not reach the fort till towards the close of November. On the 21st he thus describes the weather: "That night we lay on the south shore of Egg River, but long before daybreak the next morning, the weather being so bad, with a violent gale of wind from the north-west, and such a drift of snow that we could not have a bit of fire; and as no good woods were near to afford us shelter, we agreed to proceed on our way, especially as the wind was on our backs; and though the weather was bad near the surface we could frequently see the moon and sometimes the stars, to direct us in our course. In this situation we continued walking the whole day, and it was not until after ten at night that we could find the smallest tuft of wood to put up in; for though

* "This leader," says Hearne, "when a youth, resided several years at the above Fort, and was not only a perfect master of the Southern Indian language, but by being frequently with the Company's servants had acquired several words of English and was one of the men who brought the latest accounts of the Copper-mine River. It was on his information, added to that of one I-dot-le-ezry (who is since dead), that this expedition was set on foot."


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A Dog Brigade.

we well knew we must have passed by several hummocks of shrubby wood that might have afforded us some shelter, yet the wind blew so hard and the snow drifted so excessively thick that we could not see ten yards before us the whole day."

That night his dog, a valuable animal, was frozen to death, and after that there was nothing for it but he must himself haul his heavy sledge over the snowdrifts.

Twice baffled, yet the intrepid explorer was far from being swerved from his purpose. Not even the distrust of Norton, who wrote home to the Company that Hearne was unfit for the task in hand, could discourage him from making a third attempt. On this journey, his plan was to secure the company and assistance of Matonabee, and three or four of the best Indians under that chief; and this was put into practice on the 7th of December, 1770. This time the departure took place under different auspices. There was no firing of cannon from the fort, no cheering, and no hearty Godspeeds from the Governor and his staff.

Again, similar adventures to those encountered the first two journeys were met with. Hearne cultivated the friendship of strange, but not hostile, savages as he went along. In one locality he took part in "snaring deer in a pound," or large stockade. The rest of the winter was spent in such a succession of advances as the weather and state of the country permitted. In April it was possible to obtain supplies of birch wood staves for tent poles, and birch rind and timber for building canoes. Spring enabled the party to proceed with greater rapidity, and at last a rendezvous at a place called Clowey was reached. From this point the final dash for the Coppermine River, the main object of the expedition, must be made. At Clowey some hundreds of Indians joined the little party to proceed to the Coppermine, and thus it grew suddenly into a military expedition, for the tribe was bent on making war on the Esquimaux, should the latter be discovered.

The long-desired spot was attained at last. On the 14th of July Hearne and his party looked out over the dancing surface of the Coppermine River, and descending this stream to its mouth beheld the Arctic Ocean. Hearne thus being the first white man to reach the northern sea from the interior.

The expedition reaches the Arctic.

Says the explorer: "In those high latitudes, and at this season of the year, the sun is always at a good height over the horizon, so that we not only had daylight, but sunshine the whole night; a thick fog and drizzling rain then came on, and finding that neither the river nor sea were likely to be of any use, I did not think it worth while to wait for fair weather to determine the latitude exactly by an observation. For the sake of form, however, after having had some consultation with the Indians, I erected a mark and took possession of the coast, on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company. I was not provided with instruments for cutting on stone, but I cut my name, date of the year, etc., on a piece of board that had been one of the Indian's targets, and placed it in a heap of stones on a small eminence near the entrance of the river, on the south side."

"It is, indeed," remarks Hearne, "well known to the intelligent and well-informed part of the Company's servants, that an extensive and numerous tribe of Indians, called E-arch-e-thinnews, whose country lies far west of any of the Company's or Canadian settlements, must have traffic with the Spaniards on the west side of the continent; because some of the Indians who formerly traded to York Fort, when at war with those people, frequently found saddles, bridles, muskets, and many other articles in their possession which were undoubtedly of Spanish manufacture."*

* "I cannot sufficiently regret," wrote Hearne in 1796, "the loss of a considerable vocabulary of the northern Indian language, containing sixteen folio pages, which was lent to the late Mr. Hutchins, then corresponding secretary to the Company, to copy for Captain Duncan, when he went on discoveries to Hudson's Bay in the year 1790. But Mr. Hutchins dying soon after, the vocabulary was taken away with the rest of his effects and cannot now be recovered, and memory, at this time, will by no means serve to replace it."

Hearne went home to England and related his experiences in a paper read before his employers, the Honorable Adventurers.* It was not until some years later that it was discovered that he had, either in ignorance or, according to one of his enemies named Dalrymple, "in a desire to increase the value of his performance," placed the latitude of the Copper-mine at nearly 71 degrees north instead of at about 67½ degrees. Hearne's own apology was that after the breaking of his quadrant† on the second expedition, he was forced to employ an old Elton quadrant, which had for thirty years been amongst the relics and rubbish of Prince of Wales' Fort. But the geographical societies were indignant at having been thus imposed upon.

Hearne returns to England.

"I cannot help observing," wrote Hearne, "that I feel myself rather hurt at Mr. Dalrymple's rejecting my latitude in so peremptory a manner and in so great a proportion as he has done; because before I arrived at Cange-cath-a-whachaga, the sun did not set during the whole night, a proof that I was then to the northward of the Arctic circle."

Hearne's journey, considering the epoch in which it was undertaken, the life led by the Company's servants at the forts, and the terrible uncertainties incident to plunging into an icy wilderness, with no security against hunger or the attacks of savages, was greater than it really appeared, and without doubt paved the way for the Company's new policy.

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*The Company had previously written thus to its servant, Mr. Samuel Hearne:—

Sir,—Your letter of the 28th August last, gave us the agreeable pleasure to hear of your safe return to our factory. Your journal and the two charts you sent sufficiently convinces us of your very judicious remarks.

We have, naturally, considered your great assiduity in the various accidents which occurred in your several journeys. We hereby return you our grateful thanks, and to manifest our obligation we have consented to allow you a gratuity of £200 for those services.

† "Mr. Dalrymple, in one of his pamphlets relating to Hudson's Bay, has been so very particular in his observations on my journey, as to remark that I have not explained the construction of the quadrant which I had the misfortune to break in my second journey to the North. It was a Hadley quadrant, with a bubble attached to it for a horizon, and made by Daniel Scatlif, of Wapping."—*Hearne.*

With the ship which brought Hearne over from England came a large number of young Orkney Islanders.

The labouring servants, as has been seen, were first in 1712, and from about 1775 onwards, procured from the Orkney Islands, their wages being about £6 a year. They were engaged by the captains of the ships, usually for a period of five years. Each servant signed a contract on his entrance into the service to serve for the term and not to return home until its expiration, unless recalled by the Company. He engaged during his passage back to do duty as watch on board ship without extra pay; but that which was the last and principal clause of the agreement related to illicit trading. He was bound in the most solemn manner not to detain, secrete, harbour or possess any skin or part of a skin, on any pretence whatever; but on the contrary, he was to search after and detect all persons who might be disposed to engage in this species of speculation. Should he detect any such, he was to expose them to the Governor. If contrary to this agreement, any persons should be found bold enough to conceal any peltry or otherwise infringe his contract, they were to forfeit all the wages due them by the Company. Although a further penalty was nominally exacted under the contract, that of a fine of two years' pay, it was rarely carried into effect, and then only when the delinquent was believed to have largely profited by his illegal transaction.

Company employ Orkney Islanders.

In the early days when a servant's time expired and he was about to return home, the Governor in person was supposed to inspect his chest, even examining his bedding and other effects, to see that it contained not even the smallest marten skin. An almost equally rigorous surveillance attended the sending of private letters and parcels, not merely in the Bay alone, but in London. In the latter case, the parcel of clothing, etc., intended for the Company's distant servant, was first obliged to be sent to the Hudson's Bay House, and there undergo a careful examination for fear it should contain anything used in private trade.

During the time that the Indians were at the posts trading

their furs, the gates were continually kept closed, it being the regular employment of one person to see that no one made his exit for fear he should attempt a private barter with the Indians. While this rule was rarely relaxed, yet it was not at all of the forts that a too strict watch was kept on the movements of the employees. At York Fort, however, during the eighteenth century, if a servant wished to take a walk on a Sunday afternoon, at a time when no natives were trading, it was first necessary to apply to the Governor for leave.

Of the run of the Company's servants in the latter half of the eighteenth century, a writer of that day has said of them: "They are a close, prudent, quiet people, strictly faithful to their employers," adding that they were "sordidly avaricious."

Whilst these young Scotchmen were scattered about the country in small parties amongst the Indians, their general behaviour won them the respect of the savages, as well as procured them their protection. It is a significant fact that for the first fifteen years of the new *régime* the Company did not suffer the loss of a single man, notwithstanding that their servants were annually exposed to all the dangers incident to the trade and times.

Character of the Company's traders.

It was observed that very few of the Canadian servants were to be entirely trusted with even a small assortment of goods, unless some substantial guarantee were first exacted. The chances were ten to one that the master would be defrauded of the whole stock of merchandise, often through the medium of the Indian women, who were quick to perceive what an easy prey was the one and how difficult the other. The French-Canadian traders were brave and hardy; apt in learning the habits and language of the Indians; dexterous canoemen and of a lively, not to say boisterous, disposition; but none of these qualities, nor all together, were often the means of earning the respect and trust of the natives. And it must not be imagined that these talents and accomplishments were limited to the Canadians, even in the earliest days of rivalry.

"Though such may be the sentiments of their employers," wrote one of the Company's factors, "let these gentlemen for a while look around them and survey without prejudice the inhabitants of our own hemisphere, and they will find people who are brought up from their infancy to hardships, and inured to the inclemency of the weather from their earliest days; they will also find people who might be trusted with thousands, and who are much too familiarized to labour and fatigue to repine under the pressure of calamity as long as their own and their master's benefit is in view. I will further be bold to say that the present servants of the Company may be led as far inland as navigation is practicable, with more ease and satisfaction to the owners, than the same number of Canadians."

The former, it was noted, would be always honest, tractable and obedient, as well from inclination as from fear of losing their pecuniary expectations; whereas the latter, being generally in debt, and having neither good name, integrity nor property to lose, were always neglectful of the property committed to their charge. Whenever difficulties arose there was never wanting some amongst them to impede the undertaking.

The Governor at each factory occasionally had a person to act with him, who was known as the second or under-factor. These, with the surgeon and the master of the sloop, constituted a council, who were supposed to deliberate in all cases of emergency or upon affairs of importance. Amongst the latter were classed the reading of the Company's general letter, received annually and inditing a reply to it; the encroachments of their French, at a later period, Canadian rivals; or the misbehaviour of the servants. In these councils very little regard, it seems, was paid to the opinion of the subordinate members, who rather desired to obtain the Governor's favour by acquiescence rather than his resentment by opposition.

The council at the forts.

The Governors were appointed for either three or five years, and their nominal salary was from £50 to £150 per

annum, which the premium on the trade often trebled and sometimes quadrupled. These officials commonly reigned as absolute in their petty commands as Eastern Nabobs; and as it was in a Governor's power to render the lives of those under them happy or unhappy as they chose, it was only natural that the inferior servants were most diligent in cultivating their good will. It was out of the power, of course, for any aggrieved or dissatisfied servant to return home until the ships came, and if he then persisted in his intention, the payment of his wages was withheld until the Company should decide upon his character, which was furnished in writing by the Governor. Although the voice of an inferior servant counted but little when opposed to the Governor, yet there are few instances when the Company, in parting with a servant, refused him his wages in full.

It is an old axiom that austerity is acquired by a term of absolute petty dominion, so that it is not remarkable that the Company's early Governors were distinguished by this trait in the fullest degree.

"I had an opportunity," wrote one former factor, "of being acquainted with many Governors in my time. I could single out several whose affability and capacity merited a better employment. Some I have known who despised servility and unworthy deeds; but this was only for a time, and while young in their stations."

Such criticism, while doubtless unjust, had yet, applied generally, a basis of truth.

Robson complains of a Governor at Churchill, in his time, who had a thousand times rendered himself obnoxious to society. But perhaps the Company had never in its employ a more eccentric and choleric official than the governor who was in command of York Factory from 1773 to 1784. It is said of him that his bad name extended even across the Atlantic and reached the Orkney Isles, where the malevolence of his disposition became a by-word, and restrained many youths from entering the Company's service. Intoxication seems to have been this Governor's principal delight, and

Character of the trading governors.

this was often gratified at the expense of common prudence, as when the French captured York Factory in 1782; no common spirits being on hand, he procured raw alcohol from the surgeon, of which he drank several bumpers to raise his courage.

Although most of the Company's early trading Governors were, in spite of their tempers and habits, persons of education and intelligence, yet there were occasional exceptions. One, Governor Hughes, was said to be incapable of casting up a simple sum in addition; numeral characters being almost unknown to him; nor was his success in writing his own name greater. Yet his courage and business ability was beyond question.

It has already been observed that the Company were accustomed to treat with much deference, and to place great reliance upon their chief factors while these were at their posts in the Bay; yet it must not be supposed that the same consideration was extended to them on their return home. A Governor, it was said by one of the Company's servants, might attend the Hudson's Bay House, and walk about their Hall for a whole day without the least notice being taken of his attendance. It is related that one such Governor, after having served the Company for a matter of seventeen years, went home in 1782, expecting to reap in person some of the rewards of his faithful service in the compliments and attentions of the Adventurers as a body. But, to his chagrin, not the slightest notice was taken of him, and he returned without having even been introduced to a single partner.

On the 29th of December, 1773, there died one of the notable characters in the Bay, Governor Moses Norton. Norton was an Indian half-breed, the son of a previous Governor, Richard Norton. He was born at Prince of Wales' Fort, but had been in England nine years, and considering the small sum spent on his education, had made considerable progress in literature. At his return to the Bay, according to Hearne, he entered into all the abominable vices of his countrymen. He established a seraglio, in which figured five or

Death of Governor Norton.

six of the most comely Indian maidens. Yet, although somewhat lax in his morality himself, he seems to have been by no means indulgent to others. To his own friends and relatives, the Indians and half-breeds, it is said, he was "so partial that he set more value on, and showed more respect to, one of their favourite dogs than he ever did to his first officer." This is probably a spiteful exaggeration, but it is certain that Norton, although a man of ability, was not very popular. His great desire was to excite admiration for his skilful use of drugs. "He always," declared one of the Governor's enemies, "kept about him a box of poison to administer to those who refused him their wives or daughters." With all these bad qualities, no man took greater pains to inculcate virtue, morality and continence upon others; always painting in the most glaring colours the jealous and revengeful disposition of the Indians, when any attempt was made to violate the chastity of their wives and daughters.

His apartments at the fort were not only convenient, but had some pretensions to elegance, and were always crowded with his favourites. As this Governor advanced in years, his jealousy increased, and it is said he actually poisoned two of his women because he thought they had transferred their affections elsewhere. He had the reputation of being a most notorious smuggler; but though he put many thousands into the pockets of the Company's captains, he seldom put a shilling into his own.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1773–1782.

Company Suffers from the Rivalry of Canadians—Cumberland House built—Debauchery and license of the Rivals—Frobisher Intercepts the Company's Indians—The Smallpox Visitation of 1781—La Pérouse appears before Fort Prince of Wales—Hearne's Surrender—Capture of York Fort by the French—The Post Burned and the Company's Servants carried away Prisoners.

The Company was not immediately advised of the ruinous proceedings of the Montreal traders by its governors at York and Churchill. But at length the diminution of trade became marked. The Indians continued to bring in reports of other white traders speaking English, who intercepted them and gave them trinkets and rum in exchange for their furs. They declared they were conscious of having made a bad bargain in not continuing onward to the Company's posts, but what could they do? "The *Bostonnais** was cunning and he deceived the Indian." At last, in view of this, it was felt that further delay were folly.

In the spring of 1773 instructions were sent out to Governor Norton to despatch Hearne westward and establish a post in the interior. By this time the rival Canadian traders had carried the trade beyond the French limits, although, for reasons to be disclosed, all their activity was in vain, so far as material results either to themselves or their employers or capitalists were concerned, not to mention the aborigines themselves.

Cumberland House built.

Hearne hit upon what he considered a good site for the new post at Sturgeon Lake, on the eastern bank, in latitude 53°, 56 and longitude 102°, 15. The post prospered almost

*The Eastern traders were always known by this title, as though hailing from Boston, in contradistinction to the "King George men."

from its foundation. The neighbouring tribes found that here were to be procured a larger and better assortment of goods than the Canadians brought them, and frequented it in preference.*

For several years now a trade with the Indians had been carried on in the footsteps of the French license-holders.

What was to be expected when the character of the Montreal traders themselves, and the commerce they prosecuted, was considered, soon happened. This army of half-wild



VISIT TO AN INDIAN ENCAMPMENT.

men, armed to the teeth, unhampered by legal restraint, constantly drinking, carousing and quarrelling amongst themselves, gradually spread over the north-west, sowing crime and anarchy wherever they went. The country they traded in was so distant, and their method of transportation so slow, that they were fortunate if they reached their winter quarters without leaving the corpses of several of their number to mark their path.

Was it singular that trade carried on in such a fashion, and with results so ruinous, should cause the "partners," as these unhappy individuals, who had furnished the funds, were

* Upon the new post was bestowed the name of Cumberland House.

called, to contemplate the future with dismay? Season after season the "winterers" returned to the Grand Portage with the same tale; and season after season were better profits promised, but never, alas, for their dupes, were these promises fulfilled!

Matters were thus going from bad to worse in this way, when one sober and enterprising trader, Joseph Frobisher, resolved to leave the beaten track and penetrate nearer to the Company's Factory, at Churchill, than had yet been done. In the spring of 1775, as a band of Indians were on their way as usual to Prince of Wales' Fort, they were met by Frobisher, who caused them to halt and to drink and smoke with him. The chiefs imagined he was one of the Company's factors, and Frobisher did not choose to undeceive them. His wares being of a better quality than those of his compeers, the Indians suffered themselves to be persuaded to trade on the spot, which was at a portage afterwards called by the Montreal traders La Traite, on account of this episode. The Indians, nevertheless, resumed their journey to Churchill River, where the indignation of Hearne and the Council knew no bounds. He informed the Indians that a "scurvy trick" had been played upon them; and so characterized it in his journal. A few having still some of the heavier furs by them, were paid double, as an encouragement to their future discrimination. Nevertheless, in spite of all, the "scurvy trick" was repeated by Frobisher the following year, both times securing enormous booty.*

Frobisher intercepts Company's Indians.

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* The following were the prices paid by the Company about 1780, at its inland posts:—

A gun	20	Beaver skins.
A strand blanket	10	do.
A white do	8	do.
An axe of one pound weight	3	do.
Half a pint of gunpowder	1	do.
Ten balls	1	do.

The principal profits accrued from the sale of knives, beads, flint, steels, awls and other small articles. Tobacco fetched one beaver skin per foot of "Spencer's Twist," and rum "not very strong," two beaver skins per bottle.

The difficulties and sufferings of these two undertakings, however, affected him with a distaste for a repetition ; but he sent his brother Benjamin to explore the region still farther. This he accomplished, going as far west as the Lake of Isle a la Cross.

The difficulties of transport are pointed out in letters of Frobisher and McGill. The value of each canoe load, on arrival at Michilimackinac, had been estimated, in 1780, to be £660 currency, equal to $2,640, showing the cost of transport by the Ottawa to have been $640 for each canoe ; the value at Montreal having been $2,000. In April, 1784, Benjamin Frobisher wrote that twenty-eight canoes were ready to be sent off, valued at £20,000 currency, or $80,000, a sum for each canoe largely in excess of the estimate of four years before.

Frobisher's success in intercepting the Company's Indians induced others to attempt a similar course. The idea was, of course, to give goods of a better character, and to travel so far into the savage country as to relieve the Indian, who always contemplated the annual journey to the Company's post with repugnance of such necessity. In 1779 Peter Pond, an able, but desperate character, was the first to attempt storing such goods as he could not bring back immediately, in one of the wintering huts at Elk River, against his return the following season. This imitation of a Company's post proved successful, and led to its being repeated on a larger scale.

But matters were not equally propitious with the vast bulk of the peddlers, bushrangers, swashbucklers, and drunken half-breeds who were comprised in the Canadian trading fraternity. A numerous crew of them got from their winter quarters at Saskatchewan to the Eagle Hills in the spring of 1780. Here they held high carouse amidst a body of Indians as drunken, and much more noisy and abandoned, as themselves. One of the traders becoming tired of the continued application of an Indian for more grog, gave him a dose of laudanum. The



INDIAN TRAPPERS. *(From "Picturesque Canada," by permission.)*

savage thereupon staggered a few steps away, lay down and died. A cry went up from the man's wives, a skirmish ensued, and the sun went down on seven corpses. One of the traders, two of his men, and four half-breed voyageurs lost their lives, and the rest were forced to abandon their all and take to flight.

The same spring, two of the Canadian posts on the Assiniboine River were assailed during a quarrel. Several white men and a large number of Indians were killed.

The fearful act of vengeance which might now have been meditated at this juncture was never carried out, for in 1781 an epidemic of smallpox broke out, wreaking a memorable destruction upon all the Indians of Rupert's Land.

Terrible smallpox epidemic.

It is worthy of remark, the extraordinary and fatal facility with which this disease had always made headway among the aborigines of the North American continent. There must have been some predisposition in their constitutions which rendered them an easy prey to this scourge of Europe. Later, when the boon, brought into Europe by Lady Mary Montague arrested and partially disarmed the monster, smallpox had wrought unmitigated havoc amongst whole tribes and circles of the Red men, more than decimating the entire population and occasionally destroying whole camps, while leaving scarcely more than one shrivelled hag to relate to the Company's factors the fell tale of destruction.

The scourge which depopulated vast regions naturally cleared the country of white traders. Two parties did, indeed, set out from Montreal in 1781-82, with the avowed intention of making permanent settlements on Churchill River and at Athabasca. But the smallpox had not yet done its worst, and drove them back with only seven packages of beaver. This season was a better one than the preceding for the Company's factories; but an event now happened scarcely foreseen by anyone. England and France had been again at war, but none had as yet dreamt of a sea attack on the Company's posts in the Bay. Such a thing had not happened for

upwards of eighty years, and the conquest of Canada seemed to so preclude its probability that the Adventurers had not even instructed its governors to be on the alert for a possible foe.

Up to the era of the terrible smallpox visitation in 1782, the remote Chippewas and far-off tribes from Athabasca and the Great Slave Lake, travelling to Prince of Wales' Fort, must have gazed with wonder at its solid masonry and formidable artillery. The great cannon whose muzzles stared grimly from the walls had already been woven into Indian legend, and the Company's factors were fond of telling how the visiting Red men stood in astonishment for hours at a time before this fortress, whose only parallel on the continent was Quebec itself.

Fort Prince of Wales had been built, as we have seen, at a time when the remembrance of burned factories and posts easily captured and pillaged by French and Indians was keen amongst the Honourable Adventurers. But that remembrance had long since faded; the reasons for which the fort had been built had seemingly vanished. Wherefore gradually the garrison waned in numbers, until on the 8th of August, 1782, only thirty-nine defenders* within its walls witnessed the arrival of three strange ships in the Bay. Instantly the word ran from mouth to mouth that they were three French men-of-war. All was consternation and incredulity at first, quickly succeeded by anxiety. Two score pair of English eyes watched the strangers, as pinnace, gig and long-boat were lowered, and a number of swarthy whiskered sailors began busily to sound the approaches to the harbour. As may be believed, an anxious night was passed in the fort by Governor Samuel Hearne and his men. Daybreak came and showed the strangers already disembarking in their boats, and as the morning sun waxed stronger, an array of four hundred troops was seen to be drawn up on the shore of Churchill Bay, at a

French attack Fort Prince of Wales, 1782.

* "What folly," asks one of the Company's servants, "could be more egregious than to erect a fort of such extent, strength and expense and only allow thirty-nine men to defend it?"

place called Hare Point. Orders were given to march, and with the flag of France once more unfurled on these distant sub-Arctic shores, the French attacking party approached the Company's stronghold.

When about four hundred yards from the walls they halted, and two officers were sent on ahead to summon the Governor to surrender. The French ships turned out to be the *Sceptre*, seventy-four guns, the *Astarte*, and the *Engageante*, of thirty-six guns each, and the force possessed besides four field guns, two mortars, and three hundred bomb-shells. This fleet was in command of Admiral Pérouse.

It appears that La Pérouse had counted on arriving just in time to secure a handsome prize in the Company's ships, for which he had lain in wait in the Bay. Hearne seems to have been panic-stricken and believed resistance useless.

To the surprise of the French, a table cloth snatched up by the Governor was soon seen waving from the parapet of the fort. Fort Prince of Wales had thus yielded without a shot being fired on either side.

The French admiral lost no time in transporting what guns he could find to his ships, and replenishing his depleted commissariat from the well-filled provision stores of the fort.*

La Pérouse was both angry and disappointed at the escape of the Company's ships and cargoes. One of these ships, bound for Fort Churchill, he had met in the Bay and immediately sent a frigate in pursuit. But Captain Christopher, by the steering of the French frigate, judged rightly that her

*An account of Hearne's journey was found in MS. among the papers of the Governor, and La Pérouse declares in his memoirs that Hearne was very pressing that it should be returned to him as his private property. "The goodness of La Pérouse's heart induced him to yield to this urgent solicitation, and he returned the MS. to him on the express condition, however, that he should print and publish it immediately on his arrival in England." "Notwithstanding this," observes Mr. Fitzgerald, "Hearne's travels did not appear until 1795, *i.e.*, twenty-three years after they were performed." This gentleman, so distinguished in his zeal to prove a case against the Company, evidently overlooks the circumstance of the gist of travels having been issued in pamphlet form in 1773 and again in 1778-80. The volume of 1795 was merely an application—the product of Hearne's leisure upon retirement.

commander knew nothing of the course, and so resorted to strategy. When night came he furled his sails, as if about to anchor, a proceeding which the French captain imitated. When he had anchored, the Company's vessel re-set her sails, and was soon many leagues distant by the time the French fleet reached Churchill River.

Possession was followed by license on the part of the soldiers, and the utter looting of the fort. An attempt was made, occupying two days, to demolish it; but although French gunpowder was freely added to the Company's store, yet the walls resisted their best efforts.



Ruins of Fort Prince of Wales.

Of solid masonry, indeed, was Prince of Wales' Fort. The French artillerymen could only displace the upper rows of the massive granite stones, dismount its guns, and blow up the gateway, together with the stone outwork protecting it.

It has been remarked as strange that Hearne, who had proved his personal bravery in his Arctic travels, should have shown such a craven front on this occasion to the enemy.

Indeed, Umfreville, who was himself taken prisoner at the capture of the fort, declared that he, with others, were disgusted at the Governor's cowardice. He asserted that the French were weak and reduced in health after a long sea voyage, most of them wretchedly clad, and half of the entire number barefoot.

"I assume, your Honours," wrote John Townsend, "that had we shown a front to the enemy, our fort would have outlasted their ammunition, and then they would have been completely at our mercy."

Hearne blamed for surrendering.

The Company was very indignant at the conduct of Governor Hearne. They demanded the reason of his not sending a scout overland to apprise the Governor of York Factory of the enemy's proximity. To this Hearne replied that he was given no opportunity, and that any such scout would have been inevitably seized and slain.

On the 11th of August the French fleet set sail for Port Nelson and anchored there. One of the Company's ships was in the harbour at the time, and the captain, perceiving the approach of three large ships, and scenting danger, put out to sea in the night. He was instantly pursued by a frigate, which obviously outsailed him. Whereupon Captain Fowler tacked and made for the south in the hope of enticing the Frenchman into shallow water. But her commander was by no means to become so easy a prey to destruction, and refused to follow.

On the following day the news was brought to the Governor that the enemy was landing in fourteen boats, provided with mortars, cannon, scaling ladders, and about three hundred men, exclusive of marines.

York Factory at this time was garrisoned by sixty English and twelve Indians. Its defence consisted of thirteen cannon, twelve and nine pounders, which formed a half-moon battery in front; but it being thought probable that the enemy would arrive in the night and turn these guns against the fort, they were overturned into the ditch. On the ramparts were

twelve swivel guns mounted on carriages, and within were abundance of small arms and ammunition. Besides, a rivulet of fresh water ran within the stockades; and there were also thirty head of cattle and as many hogs within the confines of the fort.

On the 22nd, two Indian scouts were sent out to obtain intelligence; these returned in about three hours with the information that, in their judgment, the enemy were less than a league distant. Indeed they had heard several guns fired in the neighbourhood of the fort; and at sunset of that day all could plainly discern a large fire, presumably kindled by the French about a mile and a half to the west.

French attack York Factory.

At ten o'clock the next morning, the enemy appeared before the gates. "During their approach," says one of those in the fort at the time, "a most inviting opportunity offered itself to be revenged on our invaders by discharging the guns on the ramparts, which must have done great execution."

Unhappily, the Governor was hardly the man for such an occasion. He knew nothing of war, and had a wholesome dread of all armed and equipped soldiery. He trembled so that he could scarcely stand, and begged the surgeon, "for God's sake to give him a glass of liquor to steady his nerves." There being none at hand, he swallowed a tumbler of raw spirits of wine. This so far infused courage and determination into his blood, that he peremptorily declared he would shoot the first man who offered to fire a gun. Dismay took possession of many of the Company's servants, and the second in command and the surgeon endeavoured to expostulate. To avert this, the Governor caught up a white sheet with his own hand and waved it from a window of the fort. This was answered by the French officer displaying his pocket handkerchief.

Under the sanction of this flag of truce, a parley took place. The Governor was summoned to surrender within two hours.

But no such time was needed by the Governor; and the fort was most ingloriously yielded in about ten minutes. In

vain did the council plead that this fort might have withstood the united efforts of double the number of those by whom it was assailed in an attack with small arms. In vain they demonstrated that from the nature of the enemy's attack by way of Nelson River, they could not use their mortars or artillery, the ground being very bad and interspersed with woods, thickets and bogs. The Governor was resolved to yield the place, and he carried out his intention much to the astonishment and satisfaction of La Pérouse.

The unwisdom of the surrender was afterwards made too apparent. It was made to a half-starved, half-shod body of Frenchmen, worn out by fatigue and hard labour, not a man of whom was familiar with the country. It was perceived also, when it was too late, that the enemy's ships lay at least twenty miles from the factory, in a boisterous sea. Consequently, they could not co-operate with their troops on shore, save with the greatest difficulty and uncertainty, and if the fort had held out a few weeks it would have been impossible. The French troops could have received no supplies but what came from the ships; and cold, hunger and fatigue were working hourly in favour of the Company's men.

Unwise surrender.

La Pérouse now issued orders for the fort to be evacuated and burned, and the Company's people were taken prisoners.

The Company suffered great loss by the capture of York Factory, which had, as we have seen, remained in their possession since the Treaty of Utrecht. The whole of the furs which had not yet been sent on board the ship were destroyed, as well as a large quantity of stores, implements and appliances which had been collecting for nearly seventy years.

This expedition had resulted in two cheap conquests for La Pérouse. But the fortunes of war bade fair to alter the situation. The Company sent in a bill to the British Government of many thousands of pounds for failing to protect their fort on Churchill River; and when peace was proclaimed, the French plenipotentiary agreed on behalf of his master to settle this bill.

Fort Prince of Wales was never rebuilt. Its ruins stand, to-day, to mark the most northern fortress on the continent of North America, scarcely inferior in strength to Louisburg or to Quebec. "Its site," remarks Dr. Bell, "was admirably chosen; its design and armament were once perfect; interesting still as a relic of bygone strife, but useful now only as a beacon for the harbour it had failed to protect." Although the French themselves sustained no loss from the English in their brief campaign against the fort; yet, owing to the severity of the climate and their own inexperience, they lost five large boats, a considerable quantity of merchandise and fifteen soldiers who were drowned in Hays' River after the surrender of the fort.



CHAPTER XXVII.

1783–1800.

Disastrous Effects of the Competition—Montreal Merchants Combine—The North-Westers — Scheme of the Association — Alexander Mackenzie—His two Expeditions Reach the Pacific—Emulation Difficult—David Thompson.

For many years up to 1770, before the traders from Canada had penetrated their territory, York Factory, had annually sent to London at least 30,000 skins. There were rarely more than twenty-five men employed in the fort at low wages. In 1790 the Company maintained nearly one hundred men at this post, at larger wages, yet the number of skins averaged only about 20,000 from this and the other posts. The rivalry daily grew stronger and more bitter. Yet from what has been seen of the habits and character of the Canadian bushrangers and peddlers, it is almost unnecessary to say that the Company's Scotchmen ingratiated themselves more into the esteem and confidence of the Indians wherever and whenever the two rivals met. The advantage of trade, it has been well said, was on their side—because their honesty was proven. But there was another reason for the greater popularity of the Company amongst the natives, and it was that the principal articles of their trading goods were of a quality superior to those imported from Canada.

Competition of the Canadian traders.

The extraordinary imprudence and ill-manner of life which characterized the Montreal traders continually offset the enterprise and exertions of their employers. Many of these traders had spent the greater portion of their lives on this inland service; they were devoid of every social and humane tie, slaves to the most corrupting vices, more especially drunkenness. So that it is not strange that they were held in small esteem by the Indians, who, a choice being free to

them, finding themselves frequently deceived by specious promises, were not long in making up their minds with whom to deal.

"Till the year 1782," says Mackenzie, "the people of Athabaska sent or carried their furs regularly to Fort Churchill, and some of them have since that time repaired farther, notwithstanding they could have provided themselves with all the necessaries which they required. The difference of the price set on goods here and at the factory, made it an object with the Chippewans to undertake a journey of five or six months, in the course of which they were reduced to the most painful extremities, and often lost their lives from hunger and fatigue. At present, however, this traffic is, in a great measure, discontinued, as they were obliged to expend in the course of their journey, that very ammunition which was its most alluring object."

But the Company was now threatened with a more determined and judicious warfare by the better class of Canadian traders. The enterprise had been checked, first by the animosity of the Indians, and at the same time by the ravages of the smallpox, but during the winter of 1783-4, the Montreal merchants resolved, for the better prosecution of their scheme, to effect a junction of interests, by forming an association of sixteen equal shares, without, however, depositing any capital. The scheme was to be carried out in this way: Each party was to furnish a proportion of such articles as were necessary in the trade, while the actual traders, or "wintering partners," of these merchants were to receive each a corresponding share of the profits. To this association was given, on the suggestion of Joseph Frobisher, the name of the North-West Company. The chief management of the business was entrusted to the two Frobishers and Simon McTavish, another Scotch merchant in Montreal.

Montreal merchants combine.

In May, 1784, accordingly, Benjamin Frobisher and McTavish went to the Grand Portage with their credentials from the other partners in the new undertaking. Here they met the bulk of the traders and voyageurs, who were delighted to

hear of the new scheme. These entered heartily into the spirit of the undertaking, and that spring embarked for the west with the merchandise and provisions brought them, with a lighter heart than they had known for years, and with a determination to profit by the disasters of the past. Not all of the chief traders, it must be said, cast in their lots with the new company. Two, named Pond and Pangman, opposed it; and finding a couple of merchants who were willing to furnish sufficient capital, resolved to strike out for themselves as rivals to the North-West company. This action occasioned, as might be expected, great bitterness and disorder. Nevertheless, it was the means of bringing to light a young Scotchman from the Isles, whose name will be forever linked with the North-West. His name was Alexander Mackenzie.

This young man had been for five years in the counting-house of Gregory, one of the merchants who had allied themselves with the two malcontents. It was now decided that Mackenzie should set out with Pond and Pangman in their separate trading venture into the distant Indian country. A more perilous business than this can scarcely be imagined. Besides the natural difficulties, the party had to encounter all the fiercest enmity and opposition of which the adherents of the new association were capable. It is enough to say that after a fearful struggle they forced the latter to allow them a participation in the trade. But the feat which resulted in the coalition of the two interests in 1787 cost them dear. One of the partners was killed, another lamed for life, and many of their voyageurs injured. Yet the establishment thus joined, and shorn of all rivals save the Great Company, was placed on a solid basis, and the fur-trade of Canada began to assume greater proportions than it had yet done under the English *régime*. As this North-West concern was finally itself to merge into the Company of which these chapters are the history, it will not be unprofitable to glance at its constitution and methods, particularly as the economic fabric was to be likewise transferred and adapted to its Hudson's Bay rival.

Alexander Mackenzie.

It was then, and continued to be, merely an association of

merchants agreeing among themselves to carry on the fur-trade by itself, although many of these merchants plied other commerce. "It may be said," observes Mackenzie, "to have been supported entirely on credit; for whether the capital belonged to the proprietor, or was borrowed, it equally bore



SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

interest, for which the association was annually accountable."

The North-West company.

The company comprised twenty shares unequally divided and amongst the parties concerned. "Of these a certain proportion was held by the people who managed the business in Canada and were styled agents for the company. Their duty

was to import the necessary goods from England, store them at their own expense at Montreal, get them made up into articles suited to the trade, pack and forward them and supply the cash that might be wanting for the outfits." For all this they received, besides the profit on their shares, an annual commission on the business done. A settlement took place each year, two of the partners going to Grand Portage to supervise affairs of that growing centre, now outrivalling Detroit, Michilimackinac and Sault Ste. Marie. The furs were seen safely to the company's warehouse in Montreal, where they were stored pending their shipment to England. This class were denominated agents for the concern.

Then there was the other proprietary class—the actual traders, who conducted the expeditions amongst the Indians and furnished no capital. If they did amass capital by the trade they could invest it in the company through the agents, but could never employ it privately. There were several who from long service and influence who had acquired double shares and these were permitted to retire from activity, leaving one of such shares to whichever young man in the service they chose to nominate, provided always he was approved by the company. Such successions, we are told, were considered as due to either seniority or exceptional merit. The retiring shareholder was relieved from any responsibility concerning the share he transferred and accounted for it according to the annual value or rate of the property. Thus the trader who disposed of his extra share had no pecuniary advantage from the sale, but only drew a continuous profit from the share which as a sleeping partner be retained.

By such means all the younger men who were not provided for at the inception of the North-West company, or when they afterwards entered into service, were likely to succeed to the situation and profits of regular partners in the concern. By their contract they entered the company's service as articled clerks for five or seven years. Occasionally they succeeded to shares before the expiration of their apprenticeship. None could be admitted as a partner unless he had first served such apprenticeship

Partnership regulations.

to the fur-trade, therefore shares were transferable only to the concern at large. As for the sleeping partner he could not, of course, be debarred from selling out if he chose, but if the transaction were not countenanced by the rest, his name continued to figure in committee, the actual owner of the share being regarded as merely his agent or attorney. A vote accompanied every share, two-thirds constituting a majority.

Such, in brief, was the remarkable constitution of this commercial body—a constitution which was in those days wholly unique. By such regular and equitable methods of providing for all classes of employees, a zeal and independence was fostered. Every petty clerk felt himself, as he was, a principal, and his loyalty and thrift became assured forthwith.

It has been argued, and not unjustly, that such a constitution was obvious, that no great merit need be ascribed to its originators, that it was evolved, so to speak, by the situation itself. The character of the fur-trade at that time was such, the commerce so hazardous and diffused over so vast a country, that without that spirit of emulation thus evoked the new fur company must quickly have resolved itself into its constituent particles. Nevertheless, shrewdness, courage and foresight were demanded, and in the persons of these Canadian Scotchmen were forthcoming.

As for the value of the business in 1788, all the furs, merchandise, provisions and equipments were worth the sum of £40,000. This might properly be called the stock of the Company, for, as Mackenzie, who was now one of its traders, remarked, it included, within the gross expenditure for that year, the amount of the property unexpended, which having been appropriated for that year's adventure, was carried on to the account of the next season.

So greatly did the new Company flourish that the gross amount of the adventure ten years later, was close upon £125,000. But in that year, 1798, a change was to occur which will be dealt with in another chapter.

In 1789 Mackenzie felt the time ripe to prosecute a journey towards which his mind had long been directed—that journey

overland to the Pacific, in which Verandrye, as we have seen, had failed through the hand of death. His commercial associates by no means relished the enterprise; but Mackenzie's power and influence had now grown considerable, and he found means this year to carry out his wish. On the 3rd of June, 1789, Mackenzie set out from Fort Chipewyan, at the head of Athabaska Lake, a station nearly midway between Hudson's Bay and the Pacific.

Mackenzie's expedition to the Arctic.

The young explorer had served here for eight years, and was familiar with the difficulties he had to face, as well as aware of the best methods of overcoming them. Taking with him four canoes, he embarked a German and four Canadians with their wives in the first. The second canoe was occupied by a northern Indian, called English Chief, who had been a follower of Matonabee, Hearne's chief guide and counsellor. This worthy was accompanied by his two wives. The third was taken up by two sturdy young savages, who served in the double capacity of hunters and interpreters; whilst the fourth was laden with provisions, clothing, ammunition, and various articles designed as presents to the Indians. This canoe was in charge of one of the North-West concern's clerks, named La Roux.

In such fashion and in such numbers did Mackenzie's party set forth from Fort Chipewyan. By the 4th of June they reached Slave River, which connects the Athabasca and Slave Lakes in a course of about 170 miles; on the 9th of the same month they sighted Slave Lake itself. During this part of the journey they had suffered no other inconvenience than those arising from the attacks of the mosquitoes during the heat of the day and the excessive cold, which characterizes the nights in that country, especially in the hours near dawn.

Skirting the shore they came to a lodge of Red Knife Indians, so called from their use of copper knives. One of these natives offered to conduct Mackenzie to the mouth of that river which was the object of his search, as the Coppermine had been of Hearne's. Unhappily, so numerous were the impediments encountered from drift ice, contrary

winds, and the ignorance of their guide (whom English Chief threatened to murder for his incompetence), that it was the 29th of the month before they embarked upon the stream which to-day bears the name of the leader of the party who then first ascended it.

On quitting the lake, the Mackenzie River was found to take its course to the westward, becoming gradually narrower for twenty-four miles, till it dwindled to a stream half a mile wide, having a strong current and a depth of three and a half fathoms. A stiff breeze from the eastward now drove them on at a great speed, and after a run of ten miles the channel widened gradually until it assumed the appearance of a small lake. The guide confessed that this was the limit of his acquaintance with the river. Soon afterwards they came in sight of the chain of Harn Mountains, bearing north-west, and experienced some difficulty in resuming the channel of the river. The party continued the journey for five days with no interruption. On July 6th they observed several columns of smoke on the north bank and on landing discovered an encampment of five families of Slave and Dog-ribbed Indians, who, on the first appearance of the white men, fled in consternation to the woods. English Chief, however, called after them, in a tongue they understood, and they, though reluctantly, responded to his entreaties to return, especially when they were accompanied by offers of gifts. The distribution of a few beads, rings and knives, with a supply of grog, soon reconciled them to the strangers. But the travellers were somewhat appalled to learn from these Indians of the rigours of the journey which awaited them. These asserted that it would require several winters to reach the sea, and that old age would inevitably overtake the party before their return. Demons of terrible shape and malevolent disposition were stated to have their dwellings in the rock caves which lined the river's brim, and these were ready to devour the hardy spirits who should dare continue their journey past them. This information Mackenzie and his party endeavoured to receive with equanimity; they staggered more at

Journey down the Mackenzie River.

the narrative of two impassable falls which were said to exist about thirty days march from where they then were.

But although the effect of these tales on the leader of the expedition was not great, his Indians, already weary of travelling, drank all in with willing ears. They could hardly be induced to continue the journey. When their scruples were overcome, one of the Dog-ribbed Indians was persuaded by the present of a kettle, an axe, and some other articles, to accompany them as guide. But, alas, when the hour for embarkation came, his love of home overbore all other considerations, and his attempt to escape was only frustrated by actually forcing him on board.

Continuing their journey, they passed the Great Bear Lake River, and steering through numerous islands came in sight of a ridge of snowy mountains, frequented, according to their guide, by herds of bears and small white buffalo. The banks of the river were seen to be pretty thickly peopled with natives, whose timidity was soon overcome by small gifts. From these Indians was procured a seasonable supply of hares, partridges, fish and reindeer. The same stories of spirits or manitous which haunted the stream, and of fearful rapids which would dash the canoes in pieces, were repeated by these tribes. This time they had a real effect. The guide, during a storm of thunder and lightning, decamped in the night, and no doubt fled for home as rapidly as his legs, or improvised canoe, could carry him. No great difficulty, however, was experienced in procuring a substitute, and after a short sail the party approached an encampment of Indians, whose brawny figures, healthy appearance, and cleanliness were a great improvement on the other tribes they had seen. From these Mackenzie learnt that he must sleep ten nights before arriving at the sea. In three nights, he was told, he would meet with Esquimaux, with whom they had been at war, but were now at peace.

It was evident that none in these parts had ever heard the sound of fire-arms for, when one of Mackenzie's men discharged his fowling-piece, the utmost terror took possession of them.

When this intrepid pioneer through the lands of the Hudson's Bay Company had reached a latitude of 67° 47′, a great range of snowy mountains burst into view. Mackenzie, by this time, was convinced that the waters on which the four frail barks were gliding must flow into the Arctic Ocean.

When within a few days of accomplishing the great object of the journey, the attendant Indians sunk into a fit of despondency and were reluctant to proceed. The new guide pleaded his ignorance of the region, as he had never before penetrated to what he and his fellows termed the Benahulla Toe.* Mackenzie, thereupon, assured them all that he would return if it were not reached in seven days, and so prevailed on them to continue the journey.

The nights were now illumined by a blazing sun and everything denoted the proximity of the sea. On landing at a deserted Esquimaux encampment, several pieces of whalebone were observed; also a place where train-oil had been spilt. Signs of vegetation grew rarer and rarer.

On the 12th of July the explorer reached what appears to have been an arm of the Arctic Sea. It was quite open to the westward, and by an observation the latitude was found to be 69°. All before them, as far as they could see, was a vast stretch of ice. They continued their course with difficulty fifteen miles to the westernmost extremity of a high island, and then it was found impossible to proceed farther. Many other islands were seen to the eastward; but though they came to a grave, on which lay a bow, a paddle and a spear, they met no living human beings in those Arctic solitudes. The red fox and the reindeer, flocks of beautiful plover, some venerable white owls, and several large white gulls were the only natives.

The explorer reaches the Arctic.

But Mackenzie knew he had triumphed; for he had, as he stood on the promontory of Whale Island, caught sight of a shoal of those marine night monsters from whom the island then received its name. Before returning, Mackenzie caused a

*White Man's Lake.

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THE BUSHRANGER AND THE INDIANS.

post to be erected close to the tents, upon which the traveller engraved the latitude of the spot, his own name, the number of persons accompanying him, and the time they spent on the island.

On the 16th of July they set out on their long journey to the fort. On the 21st, the sun, which for some time had



A PORTAGE.

never set, descended below the horizon, and on that day they were joined by eleven of the natives. These represented their tribe as numerous, and perpetually at war with the Esquimaux, who had broken a treaty into which they had seduced the Indians and had massacred many of them. On one occasion an Indian of a strange tribe beyond the

mountains to the west endeavoured to draw for Mackenzie a map of that distant country with a stick upon the sand. It was a rude production, but gave the explorer an idea. The savage traced out a long point of land between two rivers. This isthmus he represented as running into the great lake, at the extremity of which, as he had been told by Indians of other nations, there was built a Benahulla Couin, or White Man's Fort.

"This," says Mackenzie, "I took to be Oonalaska Fort, and consequently the river to the west to be Cook's River, and that the body of water or sea into which the river discharges itself at Whale Island communicated with Norton Sound."

Mackenzie in vain endeavoured to procure a guide across the mountains; the natives refused to accompany him. On the 12th of September the party arrived in safety at Fort Chippewyan, having been absent one hundred and two days.

Taken in connection with Hearne's journey, this expedition was of great importance as establishing the fact of an Arctic sea of wide extent to the north of the continent. It seemed probable, also, that this sea formed its continuous boundary.

But the greater expedition of this intrepid fur-trader was yet to be undertaken. His object this time was to ascend the Peace River, which rises in the Rocky Mountains, and crossing these to penetrate to that unknown stream which he had sought in vain during his former journey. This river, he conjectured, must communicate with the ocean; and finding it, he must be borne along to the Pacific.

The explorer set out, accordingly, from Fort Chippewyan on the 10th of October, 1792, pushing on to the remotest trading post, where he spent the winter in a traffic for furs with the Beaver and Rocky Indians. When he had despatched six canoes to Chippewyan with the cargo he had collected, he engaged hunters and interpreters, built a huge canoe and set out for the Pacific. This canoe, it may be mentioned, was twenty-five feet long within, exclusive of the curves of stem and stern, twenty-six inches hold and four feet nine inches beam. At the same time it was so light that two

Mackenzie sets out for the Pacific.

men could carry it three or four miles, if necessity arose, without stopping to rest. In such a slender craft they not only stowed away their provisions, presents, arms, ammunition and baggage to the weight of three thousand pounds, but found room for Mackenzie, seven white companions and two Indians. Up to the 21st of May the party encountered a series of such difficulties and hardships that all save the leader himself were disheartened at the prospect. The river being broken by frequent cascades and dangerous rapids, it was very often necessary to carry the canoe and baggage until the voyage could be resumed in safety; and on their nearer approach to the Rocky Mountains the stream, hemmed in between stupendous rocks, presented a continuance of fearful torrents and huge cataracts. The party began to murmur audibly; and, at last, progress came to a standstill. In truth, there was some reason for this irresolution; further progress by water was impossible and they could only advance over a mountain whose sides were broken by sharp, jagged rocks and thickly covered with wood. Mackenzie despatched a reconnoitring party, with orders to ascend the mountain and proceed in a straight course from its summit, keeping the line of the river until they could ascertain if it was practicable to resume navigation.

While this party was gone on its quest, the canoe was repaired, and Mackenzie busied himself in taking an altitude which showed the latitude to be 56° 8′. By sunset the scouts had severally returned, each having taken different routes. They had penetrated through thick woods, ascended hills and dived into valleys, passed the rapids, and agreed, that though the difficulties by land were appalling, this was the only practicable course. Unattractive as was the prospect, the spirits of the party rose as night closed in. Their troubles were forgotten in a repast of wild rice sweetened with sugar; the usual evening regale of rum renewed their courage, and followed by a night's rest, they entered upon the journey next day with cheerfulness and vigour.

It is not to the purpose here to relate all that befell Mackenzie on this memorable voyage, but, after many vicissitudes,

towards the close of June he reached the spot where the party were to strike off across the country.

"We carried on our back," says Mackenzie, "four bags and a half of pemmican, weighing from eighty-five to ninety-five pounds each, a case with the instruments, a parcel of goods for presents weighing ninety pounds, and a parcel containing ammunition of the same weight; each of the Canadians had a burden of about ninety pounds, with a gun and ammunition, whilst the Indians had about forty-five pounds weight of pemmican, besides their gun—an obligation with which, owing to their having been treated with too much indulgence, they expressed themselves much dissatisfied. My own load, and that of Mr. Mackay, consisted of twenty-two pounds of pemmican, some rice, sugar, and other small articles, amounting to about seventy pounds, besides our arms and ammunition. The tube of my telescope was also slung across my shoulder, and owing to the low state of our provisions, it was determined that we should content ourselves with two meals a day."

Journey in the mountain.

About the middle of July Mackenzie encountered a chief who had, ten years before, in a voyage by sea, met with two large vessels full of white men, the first he had ever seen and by whom he was kindly received. The explorer very plausibly conjectured that these were the ships of Captain Cook. Thus the names of two of the world's great explorers were, by that episode, conjoined.

The navigation of the river, although interrupted by rapids and cascades, was continued until the 23rd, when the party reached its mouth. Here the river was found to discharge itself by various smaller channels into the Pacific.

The memorable journey was now finished, and its purpose completed. In large characters, upon the surface of a rock under whose shelter the party had slept, their leader painted this simple memorial:

"Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada by land the 22nd of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three."

Such was the inscription written with vermilion, at which

doubtless the simple aboriginal tribes came to marvel before it was washed away by the elements. But its purport was conveyed to England in another and more abiding character, which yet will not outlast the memory of the achievement. Mackenzie and his followers had paved the way; almost despite itself the Company must take possession, before long, of its own; although much had arisen which rendered the task less easy than if it had been undertaken immediately on the conquest, thirty years before.

The news of Mackenzie's journeys reaching London considerably perturbed the Honourable Adventurers and undeniably diminished their prestige. It was not that the Company did not wish to pursue discovery and bring about a knowledge of the vast unknown regions which appertained to it under the charter; it was for a long time impracticable. In 1785 it had sent out orders to continue the exploration of the west, begun by Hearne. A man had been despatched in accordance with these instructions, but his courage, or his endurance, had failed him, and he returned to Cumberland House without having accomplished anything of note. For the five or six years ensuing, the reports of the meetings of the Company are sufficient testimony to the desire of the members to take an active part in seeking trade with unknown tribes. But to effect this, men were necessary; and men of the required character were not immediately forthcoming. It was not till 1791 that, after an animated correspondence with the Colonial Office, a person was suggested for the enterprise who seemed to possess the equipment adequate to the task. This was Turner, who sought a career as an astronomer, and with him went Ross, one of the Company's clerks. Both were badly furnished for an expedition of this kind, and taking counsel among themselves, came to the conclusion that as they had to make their way through parts unknown to the Hudson's Bay servants, it would be as well to seek the assistance of the Northmen as well. From Alexander Mackenzie, Turner obtained a letter to the factor in charge of Fort Chippewa, instructing him to offer the explorers every facility and

Turner's exploration.

courtesy ; and indeed so well were Turner and his companion treated at this post that they passed the winter there. The result of this expedition went to show that Lake Athabasca, instead of being situated in proximity to the Pacific, was really distant nearly a thousand miles.

There were men enough for the work in hand if the Company had only availed themselves of them. At the very moment when Mackenzie was making his voyages, a youth was finishing his education at the Charter House who had all the cleverness, force and intrepidity for the task that all desired to see accomplished. His name was David Thompson. The time having arrived when this youth should choose a career, his inclination turned to travel in the unknown quarters of the globe, and hoping that adventure of some sort would transpire for him in the north-west of the New World, he signed as one of the clerks of the Company, and set sail in 1794 for Fort Churchill. Arriving here, he found himself "cribbed, cabined and confined." Governor Colen and himself were little to their mutual liking, and still less of the same mind, as Thompson had an ardent, energetic temperament, and was with difficulty controlled. Yet during the summer of 1795, by reason of continuous pleadings, he obtained permission to set out on a tour to the west, and with an escort of one white clerk, an Irishman, and two Indians, he travelled to Athabasca, surveying the country as he went along.

On his return from Athabasca, Thompson's term of service had expired, and he was encouraged to apply for employment with the Northmen. They desired to learn the position of their trading houses, chiefly with respect to the 49th parallel of latitude, which had become, since the treaty of 1792 with America, the boundary line between the possessions of the two countries. For several years Thompson continued in the service of the Company's rivals, surveying a considerable territory and

David Thompson.

drawing up charts and maps, which were sent to the partners at Fort William.*

After Thompson came Simon Fraser and John Stuart, the names of both of whom are perpetuated in the rivers bearing their names to-day. Fraser is described by one of his associates as "an illiterate, ill-bred, fault-finding man, of jealous disposition, but ambitious and energetic, with considerable conscience, and in the main holding to honest convictions."

Both these men bore a chief share in establishing trading posts on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, which are now associated with the Hudson's Bay Company.

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* Of David Thompson we get a portrait from Mr. H. H. Bancroft. He was, he says, "of an entirely different order of man from the orthodox fur-trader. Tall and fine looking, with sandy complexion, with large features, deep-set studious eyes, high forehead and broad shoulders, the intellectual was set upon the physical. His deeds have never been trumpeted as have those of some of the others; but in the westward explorations of the North-West Company, no man performed more valuable service or estimated his achievements more modestly. Unhappily his last days were not as pleasant as fell to the lot of some of the worn out members of the Company. He retired, almost blind, to Lachine House, once the headquarters of the Company, where he was met with in 1831 in a very decrepit condition.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1787–1808.

Captain Vancouver—La Pérouse in the Pacific—The Straits of Anian—A Fantastic Episode—Russian Hunters and Traders—The Russian Company—Dissensions amongst the Northmen—They send the Beaver to Hudson's Bay—The Scheme of Mackenzie a Failure—A Ferocious Spirit Fostered—Abandoned Characters—A series of Outrages—The affair at Bad Lake.

When Mackenzie, in July, 1793, reached the Pacific by land from the east, he had been preceded by sea only three years by Captain George Vancouver, the discoverer of the British Columbian coast. The same year Gray, sailing from Boston in 1790, entered the Columbia River farther south. But the title of Muscovy to the northern coasts had already been made good by several Russians since Bering's time, and the Company's charter secured to them the lands drained by the Fraser, Mackenzie, and Peace rivers, to the west.

So little, however, was the Russian title recognized for some time, that when this unfortunate expedition of La Pérouse, with the frigates *Boussole* and *Astralabe*, stopped on this coast in 1787, that doughty destroyer of York and Prince of Wales' Forts did not hesitate to consider the friendly harbour in latitude 58° 36′ as open to permanent occupation. Describing this harbour, which he named Port des François, he says that nature seemed to have created at this extremity of the world a port like that of Toulon, but vaster in plan and accommodation; and then, considering that it had never been discovered before, that it was situated thirty-three leagues north-west of Renedios, the limit of Spanish navigation, about two hundred and eighty-four leagues from Nootka, and one hundred leagues from Prince William Sound. The mariner records his judgment that "if the French Government had any project of a factory on this coast no nation could have the slightest right to oppose it."

La Pérouse in the Pacific.



De L'Isle's Map, 1752.

Thus was Russia to be coolly dislodged by the French! There is little doubt but that the Company, judging by its declarations in committee some years afterwards, would have had something to say in the matter. But La Pérouse and his frigates sailed farther on in their voyage and never returned to France. Their fate for a generation remained unknown, until their shipwrecked hulls were accidentally found on a desert island in the South Pacific. The unfinished journal of this zealous admiral had, however, in the meantime been sent by him overland by way of Kamschatka and Siberia to France, where it was published by decree of the National Assembly, thus making known his supposed discovery and his aspirations.

Spain also had been a claimant. In 1775 Bodega, a Spanish navigator, seeking new opportunities to plant the Spanish flag, reached a parallel of 58° on this coast, not far from Sitka; but this supposed discovery was not followed by any immediate assertion of dominion. The universal aspiration of Spain had embraced this whole region at a much earlier day, and shortly after the return of Bodega another enterprise was equipped to verify the larger claim, being nothing less than the original title as discoverer of the straits between America and Asia, and of the conterminous continent under the name of Anian. Indeed, a Spanish document appeared, which caused a considerable fluttering of hearts amongst the Adventurers, entitled "Relation of the Discovery of the Strait of Anian made by me, Captain Lorenzo Ferren Maldonado," purporting to be written at the time, although it did not see the light until 1781, when it immediately became the subject of a memoir before the French Academy. This narrative of Maldonado has long since taken its place with that of the celebrated Munchausen.

Spanish claims.

The whole fantastic episode of Anian's Straits is worthy of mention in a history of the Company and its lands. There is no doubt of the existence of early maps bearing straits of that name to the north. On an interesting map by Zoltieri, bearing the date of 1566, without latitude or longitude, the

western coast of the continent is here delineated with straits separating it from Asia, not unlike Bering's Straits in outline and with the name in Italian, Stretto di Anian; and towards the south the coast possesses a certain conformity to that which we now know. Below the straits is an indentation corresponding to Bristol Bay; then a peninsula somewhat broader than Alaska, which is continued in an elbow of the coast; lower down appear three islands, not unlike Sitka, Queen Charlotte and Vancouver; and lastly, to the south appears the peninsula of Lower California. After a time maps began to record the Straits of Anian; but the substantial conformity of the early delineation with the reality has always been somewhat of a mystery.*

The foundation of the story of Anian is said to lie in the voyage of the Portuguese navigator, Caspar de Cortereal, in 1500-1505, who, on reaching Hudson's Bay in quest of a passage to India, imagined he had found it, naming his discovery "in honour of two brothers who accompanied him."

Meanwhile Russian hunters and traders from Okhotsk were extending their expedition from the north-east coast of Siberia to the north-west coast of North America. A Russian Government expedition started from Okhotsk in 1790, under the command of Captain Billings, an Englishman in the Russian service, and to Captain Taryteheff, one of the members, are due important researches on the hydrography and ethnology of these countries. The first attempt at permanent settlement was due to three Russian traders, Shelekoff and the two Golikoffs, who fitted out two or three vessels to be sent to "the land of Alaska, also called America; to islands known or unknown, for the purpose of trading in furs; of exploring the country and entering into relations with the inhabitants." Their first expedition started in 1781, and the first settlement was founded on the Island of Kodiak. The authority of the Russian Government was thus established on this and the adjacent islands. In 1790, Shelekoff, then

Russians on the west coast.

* See map, page 246.

residing in Irkoutsk, sent out a merchant named Baranoff to govern the new colony.*

Thus the knowledge that they were being pressed in on opposite sides by the Canadian traders on the south and east, and by Russians on the north and west, reached the Company at the same time. As a matter of fact, the knowledge of Baranoff's enterprise and the energy with which it was being prosecuted did not come before the committee until October, 1794; and it was in that very month that the report of Mackenzie's journey reached them.

The next few years were devoted to devising and considering schemes to counteract these two growing competitors—to oppose the further progress of the Russians on the one hand, and to combat the North-Westers on the other.

For twenty-seven years Baranoff continued to be the controlling mind of the new Russian trading enterprise. Shelekoff died in 1795; and his widow continued the business, and upon combining with the Milnikoff Company it increased gradually in wealth. The charter of these joint enterprises, to which the name of the Russian-American Fur Company was given, was signed in August, 1798, and confirmed at St. Petersburg in 1799. That year witnessed the settlement of New Archangel, on the island of Sitka.

The consequences of this increased output were not, however, felt in the fur-markets at Leipsic. Europe was convulsed by war, and Napoleon had laid an embargo on British goods. The furs, therefore, accumulated for several years in the stores of the Hudson's Bay Company without finding a mart.

From 1787 to 1817, for only a portion of which time the Russian Company existed, the Unalaska district yielded upwards of 2,500,000 seal skins alone. The number of other skins reported at times was prodigious.

* To exhibit anew the exaggeration common to the acquisition of new possessions, I may observe that Shelekoff reported that he had subjected to the crown of Russia, "fifty thousand men in the Island of Kodiak alone." But Lisiansky, who took a prominent part in the Russian Company, remarks, in 1805, that "the population of the island, when compared with its size, is very small." After the "minutest research" at that time he found it amounted to only four thousand souls.

But the time had not come for the Company to actively assert itself in opposition to the Russians.

It was paying dearly now for its short-sightedness in not availing itself of the opportunities afforded by the conquest of Canada to penetrate into its chartered domain. In the second year of the century the Honourable Adventurers had been obliged to borrow £20,000 from the Bank of England, hoping that the cessation of war in Europe, and the quarrels of the rival Montreal traders in North America, would permit the Company to regain the advantage it had lost. For in the autumn of 1798 the Company had received advices that its prosperous Canadian rival had taken a new step in the conduct of its affairs.

Difficulties and dissensions had begun to breed in the ranks of the Northmen. A few disaffected spirits spoke of secession and carried their intentions into effect, but the stronger partners were reluctant to break up an alliance which had proved so prosperous. But in the closing year, but one of the century, the situation became intolerable and when the partners met, as was their custom at the Grand Portage, Mackenzie bluntly told his associates that he had resolved to quit the Company. He was led to this decision by a personal quarrel between himself and Simon McTavish, the chief of the North-West Company. Opposing factions sprang into being, attaching themselves to both Mackenzie and McTavish, the latter of whom strongly resented the way in which he was treated at the annual meeting by the partisans of the former, and each now determined to take his course thenceforward untrammelled by the other. Mackenzie went to England, where he published an account of his travels in the north-west and obtained the honour of knighthood, and in 1801 returned to Canada. Here his friends flocked about him, and there saw the light of a new organization, officially entitled the New North-West Company, or Sir Alexander Mackenzie & Co., but more popularly as the X. Y. Co. The two rival Canadian associations now put forth all their strength to establish their commerce in the unknown and

Rival factions in the North-West Company.

unfrequented regions. One of the old North-West employees, Livingston, who had already, in 1796, established a post nearly 100 miles north of Slave Lake, undertook to carry the trade still farther north. But this he was never destined to accomplish. A few days out on this journey he was confronted by the aborigines, who slew him and his companions. An expedition to the Bow River, however, was more successful, and in the midst of many hostile Indians a trading post was established there. Other proofs of enterprise on the part of McTavish and his associates were not wanting.

The dissensions between the two companies so far do not appear to have had a prejudicial effect on the traffic, for on the 30th October, 1802, Lieutenant Governor Milnes, in a dispatch to Lord Hobart,* gives an account of the flourishing state of the fur-trade which so far, he says, from diminishing, appears to increase. New tracts of country had been visited by the merchants employed in this traffic, which had furnished new sources of supply, a large proportion of the furs taken in the North-West being brought to Quebec for shipment.†

But, perhaps, a policy the most daring was pursued with regard to the Hudson's Bay Company. It was not expected that either McTavish and his allies, or the X. Y. concern

* Canadian archives.

† The tables enclosed in the dispatch show, first, the names and numbers of the posts occupied in the Indian country (exclusive of the King's posts), the number of partners, clerks and men employed, the latitude and longitude of each post being also given. The grand total shows that there were 117 posts, 20 partners, 161 clerks and interpreters, 877 common men, in all of a permanent staff 1,058 men, thus divided: Ninety-five in the territory of the United States from the south side of Lake Superior to the division of the waters falling into the Mississippi on the one side and Hudson's Bay on the other; seventy-six on the waters falling into the St. Lawrence from the Kaministiquia, and also from the St. Maurice; six hundred and thirty on the waters falling into Hudson's Bay, and two hundred and fifty-seven on the waters falling into the North Sea by the Mackenzie River. Besides these there were eighty or one hundred Canadians and Iroquois hunters, not servants, ranging free over the country and about five hundred and forty men employed in canoes on the Ottawa River. The average duties paid annually on landing in Britain amounted to upwards of £22,000 sterling and the price paid for the furs exported from Quebec in 1801, at the London sales, was £371,139 11s. 4d.

would long be content to forego the glory and profit attendant upon warfare at close quarters with the Chartered Company.

"What is there in their charter," they asked themselves, "which gives them benefits we cannot enjoy? We shall see."

They provided for a most effectual demonstration. In the spring of 1803, they sent the *Beaver*, a vessel of one hundred and fifty tons, to Hudson's Bay, with instructions to exploit commerce under the very guns of the Company's forts. Hardly had the *Beaver* got under way than an overland expedition was sent by the old French trading route of Lakes St. Jean and Mistassini, to the same quarter. The result was the construction of two posts, one on Charlton Island, and the other at the mouth of Moose River. The astonishment of the Company's servants can be imagined, when upon looking out one fine morning, they beheld a band of swarthy half-breeds, captained by Orkneymen, rearing premises adjacent to their own, and bidding defiance to the ancient charter of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company. They were told by their superiors not to be alarmed; the scheme of their rivals would not succeed any more than had those of the Quebec companies who a century before had sought to penetrate overland to the Bay. The company could always undersell them then; and it could now, and did. The confidence of the factors was justified, and the Indians merely smiled at the Northmen and their goods, bidding them return to their country, or betake themselves to the west, where the tribes were ignorant and knew not the value of things. So, after a season or two, the North-West concern abandoned Moose River and Charlton Island, and sought other and more fruitful fields in the west.

The Northmen at Hudson's Bay.

Mackenzie himself was in London actively engaged in promoting a scheme of his own. He sought to get the British Government to constrain the Hudson's Bay Company to grant licenses to a company of British merchants, to be established in London under the name of "The Fishery and Fur Company," which company, for the purpose of combining the fishery in the Pacific with the fur trade of the interior

from the east to the west coasts of the Continent of North America, would at once "equip whalers in England, and by means of the establishments already made and in activity at Montreal on the east and advanced posts and trading houses in the interior towards the west coast, to which they might extend it and where other establishments to be made at King George Sound, Nootka Island, under the protection of the Supreme Government, and on the River Columbia and at Sea Otter Harbour under the protection of the subordinate Government of these places, would open and establish a commercial communication through the Continent of North America between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans to the incalculable advantage and furtherance both of the Pacific Fishery of America and American Fur Trade of Great Britain, in part directly and in part indirectly, through the channel of the possessions and factories of the East India Company in China," etc., "it being perfectly understood that none of these maritime or inland establishments shall be made on territory in the possession of any other European nation, nor within the limits of the United States of North America or of the Hudson's Bay Company." The scheme, however, failed.

The Fishery and Fur Company.

The death of McTavish, in 1804, brought about a reunion of the two rival factions, and the North-West Company became stronger than ever. They imitated the Chartered Company in establishing several of their members in London as agents, who purchased the necessary merchandise and saw it safely shipped, besides attending to the fur imports and other regular business of the concern.

After the coalition of the old North-West and the X. Y. concern, and the consequent suppression of all private adventurers in Canada, the only rival of the Northmen in the Uplands was the Hudson's Bay Company. It was alleged that thenceforward the ferocious spirit which had been fostered among the clerks and servants of the two companies by six years of continual violence was all turned against the Company. It was said that not only was a systematic plan

Coalition of the North-West and X. Y. Companies.

formed for driving their traders out of all valuable beaver companies, but that hopes were entertained of reducing the Company to so low an ebb as in time to induce them to make over their chartered rights to their commercial rival. With this intent, a series of aggressive acts was now begun and carried on against the servants of the Company.



THE RIVAL TRADERS.

The Hudson's Bay Company had witnessed the encroachment of the traders, first French, then English, as well as the establishment and growth of the North-West association, without taking any active steps to forcibly restrain them. Many years was the competition carried on without any violent breach of the peace on either side. Oftentimes indeed did the rival traders meet in the wilderness at a deserted

camp, or at some remote portage, but they bore no personal enmity in their hearts. They shook hands, smoked, broke meat together, and parted—one with his beaver skins to the east, the other to the north—to Cumberland or York Factory. Doubtless the North-West concern at the beginning of the century possessed a powerful advantage in the system of profits and deserved promotion, while the Company's servants, unstimulated by any hope of additional reward or certain promotion, was calculated to foster apathy, rather than zeal.

It was claimed by the Company that the Northmen employed for their purposes men of the most abandoned character who, as Sir Alexander Mackenzie expressed it, "considered the command of their employer as binding on them, and however wrong or irregular the transaction the responsibility rested with the principal who directed them." One of the first instances of collision occurred in the year 1800. In that year Frederick Schultz, a clerk of the old Company, commanded a post near Nepigon. Amongst his men was a young lad about nineteen years of age named Labau, who understood English, and had in the course of the preceding winter become intimate with the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, who occupied a post near the same place. Labau was attracted to the Company's service and, when the traders on both sides were preparing to leave their wintering ground, resolved to go down to York Factory. Intelligence of this having reached Schultz, he sent his interpreter to order Labau to return to his duty, accompanied by a reminder that he was in debt to the North-West Company. The young man responded by offering to remit the money he owed the Company, but declared that he would not remain any longer in its service. This answer being reported to Schultz he vehemently declared that if the scoundrel would not come back willingly he would know what to do with him. The doughty Northman took his dagger, carefully whetted it, and having dressed himself in his best attire, went over to the Hudson's Bay post. Here he found Labau, and asked him in a furious tone whether he would come with him. The young man, being intimidated, faltered out an affirmative, but watch-

ing his opportunity sought to make his escape out of the room, but Schultz was too quick for him. He drew his dagger and aimed a blow which Labau tried in vain to avoid. He was stabbed in the loin, and expired the same evening. After this exploit, when Schultz returned to the assembly of the Northmen at the Grand Portage, he met with an indifferent reception, Labau being rather popular amongst his fellow-servants. It was, therefore, not thought advisable to employ Schultz any longer in that quarter, although this was the only notice taken of the murder. The murderer came down in the canoes

Murder of Labau.



YORK FACTORY. *(From an old print.)*

of the North-West concern to Montreal, where he remained at large and unnoticed for months. He was afterwards taken into the service of the Company, employed in a different region, and after several years settled down undisturbed in Lower Canada.

There can be no doubt that much of the success of the Northmen was due to the indiscriminate manner in which they extirpated the animals in the country, destroying all without distinction, whether young or old, in season or out of season. The miserable natives, over-awed by the preparation and power of the strangers, and dreading the resentment of the

Northmen, witnessed this destruction without daring to resist, although they complained bitterly that their country was wasted as if it had been overrun by fire. It is well known that the best season for hunting all the fur-bearing animals is the winter. The fur in summer is universally of inferior quality, and this, too, is the season when wild animals rear their young. For both these reasons it seemed desirable that the hunting should be suspended during the summer months, and this was effectually procured when all the best hunters, all the young and active men of the Indian tribes, were engaged in a distant excursion. There was consequently a material advantage in requiring them to leave their hunting grounds in summer, and come to the factories on the coast for a supply of European goods. While this was the practice, no furs were brought from home but those of prime quality, and as the beaver and other valuable fur-bearing animals were protected from injury during the most critical time of the year, the breed was preserved, and the supply was plentiful. But when the traders came to the interior, there to remain throughout the year, the Indians were tempted to conceal their hunts through the season. They were too improvident to abstain from killing the breeding animals or their young. The cub was destroyed with the full-grown beaver, and the consequence might readily have been foreseen. These valuable animals, formerly so numerous, rapidly approached the point of complete extermination. It was observed that the district in which they once abounded, and from which large supplies were formerly obtained, soon came to produce few or none.

In autumn, 1806, John Crear, a trader in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company (also on the establishment of Albany Factory), occupied a post at a place called Big Fall, near Lake Winipic. One evening a party of Canadians in two canoes, commanded by Mr. Alexander MacDonnell, then a clerk of the North-West Company, arrived, and encamped at a short distance. On the following morning four of Crear's men set out for their fishing grounds, about a mile off, immediately after which Mr. MacDonnell came to the house with his men,

and charging Crear with having traded furs with an Indian who was indebted to the North-West concern, insisted on these furs being given up to him. On Crear's refusal, MacDonnell's men broke open the warehouse door. William Plowman, the only servant that remained with Crear, attempted to prevent them from entering; but one of the Canadians knocked him down, while another presented a gun at Crear himself. Although MacDonnell prevented him from firing, the Canadian struck Crear in the eye with the butt end of his gun, which covered his face with blood and felled him to the ground. Mr. MacDonnell himself stabbed Plowman in the arm with a dagger, and gave him a dangerous wound. The Canadians then rifled the warehouse; the furs, being taken in summer, were of little value; but they carried off two bags of flour, a quantity of salt pork and beef, and some dried venison, and also took away a new canoe belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. In the following February MacDonnell sent one of his junior clerks with a party of men, who again attacked Crear's house, overpowered him, beat him and his men in the most brutal manner, and carried away a great number of valuable furs. They also obliged Crear to sign a paper acknowledging that he had given up the furs voluntarily, which they extorted with threats of instant death if he should refuse. Mr. Alexander MacDonnell had lately been promoted to the station of a partner in the North-West concern.

Collision at Big Fall.

In the year 1806, Mr. Fidler was sent with a party of eighteen men from Churchill Factory, to establish a trading post at Isle a la Crosse, near the borders of the Athabasca country, but within the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company. He remained there for two years, sending a detachment of his people to Green Lake and Beaver River. During the first winter he had some success, but afterwards he was effectually obstructed. On many former occasions the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company had attempted to establish a trade in this place, which is in the centre of a country abounding in beaver, but they had always been obliged to renounce the attempt. The methods used with Mr. Fidler may explain the causes of this failure.

Mr. John MacDonnell had been Mr. Fidler's competitor during the early part of the winter, but (not being inclined to set all principles of law and justice at defiance) was removed and relieved, first by Mr. Robert Henry, and then by Mr. John Duncan Campbell. The North-West concern having been established for many years at Isle a la Crosse without any competition, had obtained what they call the attachment of the Indians, that is to say, they had reduced them to such abject submission that the very sight of a Canadian was sufficient to inspire them with terror. In order that this salutary awe might suffer no diminution, the post at Isle a la Crosse was reinforced with an extra number of Canadians, so that the natives might be effectually prevented from holding any intercourse with the traders of the Hudson's Bay Company, and that the appearance of so very superior a force, ready to overwhelm and destroy him, might deter Mr. Fidler from any attempt to protect his customers. A watch-house was built close to his door, so that no Indian could enter unobserved; a party of professed batteilleurs were stationed here, and employed not only to watch the natives, but to give every possible annoyance, night and day, to the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company. Their fire-wood was stolen, they were perpetually obstructed in hunting for provisions, the produce of their garden was destroyed, their fishing lines taken away in the night time, and their nets, on which they chiefly relied for subsistence, cut to pieces. The ruffians who were posted to watch Mr. Fidler, proceeded from one act of violence to another, and in proportion as they found themselves feebly resisted, they grew bolder, and at length issued a formal mandate that not one of the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company should stir out of their house, and followed up this with such examples of severity that Mr. Fidler's men refused to remain at the post. They were compelled to leave it, and the Canadians immediately burnt his house to the ground.

A trader, William Corrigal, in the service of the Company, was stationed, in May, 1806, with a few men at a place called Bad Lake, not far from Albany Factory. Near this post was

another occupied by a much larger number of men in charge of a partner in the North-West concern named Haldane. Five of the Canadians in his service watching their opportunity broke into Corrigal's house about midnight when he and his men were in bed. The ruffians immediately secured all the loaded guns and pistols they could find, and one of them seizing the Company's trader and presenting a pistol at his breast swore to shoot him if he made any resistance. In the meantime the others rifled the storehouse and took away furs to the number of 480 beaver. On their departure Corrigal dressed himself and went immediately to Haldane, whom he found up, and fully attired, to complain of the conduct of his servants and to demand that the stolen property be restored. The answer of the Northman was that "He had come to that country for furs, and furs he was determined to have." The robbers were permitted to carry away the stolen peltries to the Grand Portage where they were sold, and formed part of the returns of the North-West concern that year. A robbery of the same character took place at Red Lake a little later in the year. This trading house was also under the charge of Corrigal, and was forcibly entered by eight of the Northmen, armed with pistols and knives; under threats to murder the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company they carried off furs to the amount of fifty beaver. Not long after this they forcibly broke open the same warehouse and robbed it of a large quantity of cloth, brandy, tobacco and ammunition.

The robbery at Bad Lake.

In the year 1808 Mr. John Spence, of the Hudson's Bay Company, commanded a post fitted out from Churchill's Factory at Reindeer Lake, in the neighbourhood of which there was a station of the North-West Company commanded by Mr. John Duncan Campbell, one of the partners. In the course of the spring, William Linklater, in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, was sent out to meet some Indians, from whom he traded a parcel of valuable furs. He was bringing them home on a hand sleigh, and was at no great distance from the house, when Campbell came out with a

number of men, stopped him, demanded the furs, and on being refused drew a dagger, with which he cut the traces of the sledge, while at the same time one of his men took hold of Linklater's shoes, tripped him up, and made him fall on the ice. The sledge of furs was then hauled away to the North-West concern's house. Campbell offered to Mr. Spence to send other furs in exchange for those which he had thus robbed him of; but they were of very inferior value, and the latter refused the compromise. The furs were carried away, and no compensation was ever made.

Violence and robbery by the North-West Company.

On a previous occasion, at Isle a la Crosse Lake (in the year 1805), the same Campbell had attacked two of the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, and took a parcel of furs from them in the same way. Some of the men from the Hudson's Bay House came out to assist their fellow-servants, but were attacked by superior numbers of the Canadians, and beaten off, with violence and bloodshed.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1808–1812.

Crisis in the Company's Affairs—No Dividend Paid—Petition to Lords of the Treasury—Factors Allowed a Share in the Trade—Canada Jurisdiction Act—The Killing of MacDonnell—Mowat's Ill-treatment—Lord Selkirk—His Scheme laid before the Company—A Protest by Thwaytes and others—The Project Carried—Emigrants sent out to Red River—Northmen Stirred to Reprisal.

England was again at war with France. Napoleon had placed an embargo on English commerce, and to the uttermost corner of Europe was this measure felt. Tons of the most costly furs, for which there was no market, lay heaped in the Company's warehouse. The greatest difficulty was experienced in procuring servants, especially seamen, and when these were procured, they were often seized by a press-gang; shares began to decline in value; numerous partners were selling out their interests, and no strong man appeared at the head of affairs.

In 1808 no dividend was paid, chiefly the result of the non-exportation of the Company's furs to the Continent of Europe. There were the accumulations of furs imported during 1806, 1807 and 1808 lying in the warehouse without prospect of sale.

The pressure still continued and at last, in 1809, the Company was driven to petition the Chancellor of the Exchequer for transmission to Lords of the Treasury, setting forth the Company's position and its claims on the nation.

"Accumulated difficulties," it said, "have pressed hardly on the Company and we ask assistance to maintain a colony that till now has found within itself resources to withstand the pressure of all former wars and to continue those outfits on which six hundred Europeans and their families and some thousands of native Indians depend for their very existence.

The Company in difficulties.

"We assure your worships that it was not until all those resources were exhausted that we came to the resolution of making the present application."

The petition recited that after having received their charter the Company had colonized such parts of newly granted territories as appeared most convenient for carrying on their commerce with the natives. This commerce "consisted in the barter of British manufactures for the furs of animals killed by the different tribes of Indians who were within reach of factories and gradually extended itself till, as at the present moment, the manufactures of Great Britain are borne by the traders of Hudson's Bay over the face of the whole country from Lake Superior to the Athabasca.

"The trade is at present pursued by the export of furs, gunpowder, shot, woollens, hardware and other articles, which together with large supplies of provisions for the factories, constitute an annual outfit consisting wholly of British manufactures and British produce of from £40,000 to £50,000, in return for which we receive the furs of bears, wolves, foxes, otters, martens, beaver and other animals, together with some oil and articles of inferior value. The cargoes are sold at public sale. The beaver and some few inferior furs, together with the oil, are bought for home consumption and sell for about £30,000, but the fine furs were, till after the sale of 1806, bought by the fur merchants for the fairs of Frankfort and of Leipsic for Petersburg, and before the present war, for France. Since that year there has not been a fur sold for exportation, and as a proof to your worships that the deficiency of buyers did not arise from our holding back for a higher market, we sold in 1806 for seven shillings per skin furs that in the more quiet state of Europe in 1804 had brought us 20s. 3d., and which for years previous to that time had sold for a similar price; and other depreciation pervaded in about the same proportion the whole of those furs calculated only for the foreign market, and in some instances furs were sold for a less price than the duties we had paid for them.

"Since that period no orders have been received from

abroad, and our warehouses are filled with the most valuable productions of three years' import that if sold at the prices of those years before the closing of the ports on the Continent would have produced us at least £150,000.

"It may be objected to us, that we were improvident in pursuing under such circumstances a trade which must so inevitably tend to ruin. But a certainty that a considerable quantity of furs found their way to New York, and an earnest zeal for the preservation of trade which by the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company had been secured to this country for a century and a half, prompted us to every exertion to maintain the footing we had established, and the annually increasing amount of our trade gave us just grounds to look forward with confidence to the opening of the northern ports of Europe as the period when all our difficulties would cease; an event which, anterior to the battles of Austerlitz or of Jena, was looked for with the most sanguine expectation.

"Above all were we impelled by the strongest motives to continue these supplies which were necessary for the subsistence of six hundred European servants, their wives and children, dispersed over a vast and extended field of the North American Continent, and who would not be brought to Europe under a period of three years as well as those upon whom the many Indian nations now depend for their very existence.

"The nations of hunters taught for one hundred and fifty years the use of fire-arms could no more resort, with certainty, to the bow or the javelin for their daily subsistence. Accustomed to the hatchet of Great Britain, they could ill adopt the rude sharpened stone to the purposes of building, and until years of misery and of famine had extirpated the present race, they could not recur to the simple arts by which they supported themselves before the introduction of British manufactures. As the outfits of the Hudson's Bay Company consist principally of articles which long habit have taught them now to consider of first necessity, if we withhold these outfits, we leave them destitute of their only means of support. The truth of this observation had a melancholy

proof in the year 1782, when from the attack made upon the settlements by La Pérouse, and the consequent failure of our supplies, many of the Indians were found starved to death.

"It was not only from the firm conviction that we felt of the necessity of European manufactures to the present existence of whole nations of North American Indians that we considered ourselves bound by the most powerful ties to exert every effort in their favour; but also that we might continue to them those advantages which would result to their religious as well as civil welfare from the progressive improvements, and a gradual system of civilisation and education which we have introduced throughout the country; improvements which are now diffusing the comforts of civilized life, as well as the blessings of the Christian faith to thousands of uninstructed Indians, and would in their completion, we can confidently assert, have tended to the future cultivation of lands, which from experiments we found capable of growing most of the grains of Northern Europe, and from their climate adapted to the culture of hemp and flax, and from the labour of those families who would have been induced to settle at our factories, might soon have brought to this country the produce of the boundless forests of pine that spread themselves over almost the southern parts of our possessions.

Petition of the Company.

"To realize these not visionary schemes, but sure and certain plans, founded upon the progressive civilization of the natives, were objects not to be given up without the most urgent necessity, and the hope that the ruler of the French Empire could not forever shut out our trade from Europe, induced us to resort to every means within our power to preserve the advantages resulting to ourselves and to the Indians, and to the British nation.

"We have exhausted those funds which we set apart for their completion; we have pledged our credit till we feel, as honest men, that upon the present uncertainty we can pledge it no farther, and we throw ourselves upon your Worship's wisdom to afford us that temporary assistance which we cannot ask at any other hands.

"Were we to resort to the early history of our settlements, we might lay the foundations of just claims upon the public to assist our present wants. We could show instances of most destructive attacks by the French upon our factories. Our forts and military works, mounted with a numerous and expensive artillery for the defence of the colony against their future operations, were destroyed and the guns ruined. And particularly was a most grievous loss occasioned to us by the predatory attack of La Pérouse about the conclusion of the American War, which caused the distress to which we have above alluded.

"Against these pressures when our trade flourished we were able to hold up, and we found within ourselves those resources which defeated the enemy's views and continued to Great Britain the trade we had established.

"And it is not until pressed to our last resort that we ask of your Lordships that assistance with which we may confidently hope to preserve our trade until the continent may be again opened, when we shall be delivered from those difficulties under which we are now sinking."

The petition was signed by Wm. Mainwaring, Governor; Joseph Berens, Deputy Governor; George Hyde Wollaston, Thomas Neave, Job Mathew Raikes, Thomas Langley, John Henry Pelly, Benjamin Harrison, John Webb.

In April the Adventurers petitioned the King in Council to reduce duties on furs to one-half, or trade must suffer extinction. No profit was derivable, it said, on marten, wolf, bear, wolverine and fisher-skins.

To this petition the Office of Committee of Privy Council for Trade, Whitehall; replied in the following February, that the memorial of the Hudson's Bay Company contained no proposition on which the Lords of this Council could "offer any opinion to the Lords of Treasury."

As their petition was denied, the Company now boldly pre-

pared a request and asked for a loan of £60,000, and that time be extended for paying the duties on furs imported until the continental market re-opened. To this request an answer was returned, allowing twelve months storage of furs free of duty and promising drawbacks as if storage had only been for one year, but stating that there were no funds out of which a loan could be made without special authority of Parliament.

Small Government assistance.

It was clear that the Company was in very low water, and that some new salutary policy was demanded. By way of a beginning, barter was abolished as a basis of trade, and money payments ordered. At the same time the Adventurers stole a leaf out of the book of the North-West company, and new regulations, comprising thirty-five articles, were made in the early months of 1810, for carrying on the business in Hudson's Bay.

The principle of allowing to their chief officers a considerable participation in the profits of their trade was admitted. It was found absolutely necessary to adopt some step of this sort, as nothing of such a measure could be sufficient to stem the torrent of aggression with which they had been assailed by the North-West company; and their absolute ruin must have ensued if some effectual means had not been taken, not only to rectify some of the abuses which had crept in under the former system, but also to rouse their officers to a more effectual resistance of the lawless violence practised against them.

The total lack of jurisdiction in the Indian country, as the territory which was the scene of the operations of the fur-traders was called, permitted crime to go unpunished, and numerous representations were made in respect to the evils of this practical immunity from punishment. In Sir Alexander Mackenzie's letter of the 25th of October, 1802, he says that, in view of the improbability of the two companies amalgamating, a jurisdiction should be established as speedily as possible, to prevent the contending fur companies from abusing the power either might possess, so as to secure to each the fruits of fair, honest and industrious exertion; it

would also, he believed, tend to put a stop to the increasing animosity between the two companies. Mr. Richardson, of the other company, also pressed for the establishment of a competent jurisdiction and instanced the case of one of the clerks in his company who had killed a clerk of the other in defending the property in his care. The young man had come to Montreal to be tried, but there being no jurisdiction there for such trial, "he remains in the deplorable predicament that neither his innocence nor his guilt can be legally ascertained." He also proposed that a military post should be established at Thunder Bay, on Lake Superior, as an additional means of securing peace.

Repeatedly had the Grand Juries of Quebec and Montreal called attention to this want of jurisdiction. In one report the number of people from the Canadas, chiefly from Lower Canada, was urged as one reason for establishing in the Indian country a court of competent jurisdiction for the trial of offences committed in these territories, including Hudson's Bay.

"The very heavy expense," observes the report, "incident to the conveyance of offenders from the Territory of Hudson's Bay to England, with the necessary witnesses on both sides, and the cost of prosecution and defence, must generally operate, either to prevent recourse to a tribunal across the ocean, and thereby stimulate to private retaliation and revenge, or where such course can or shall be had, the guilty may escape punishment, and the innocent be sacrificed from the distance of time and place of trial, the death or absence of witnesses, or other causes; and the mind cannot contemplate without horror the possible abuses to which such circumstances might give rise; as in the instance of a prosecutor coming from and at a remote day, when the accused may be destitute of pecuniary means, and the exculpatory evidence may either be dead, removed, or be otherwise beyond his reach, who at all events (however innocent he may finally be found) will have undergone a

Plea for establishment of jurisdiction.

long and painful confinement, far removed from his family and connections, and perhaps ruinous to every prospect he had in life."

Sir Robert Milnes strongly supported the representation of the Grand Jury, and added that "Under such circumstances every species of offence is to be apprehended, from Trespasses to Murder," and also that "the national character of the English will be debased among the Indians, and the numerous tribes of those people will in consequence thereof be more easily wrought upon by foreign emissaries employed by the Enemies of Great Britain." *

In consequence of these representations Lord Hobart promised that immediate steps should be taken to remedy the existing state of affairs. But Milnes became impatient for a decision, and writing in September, 1803, to the Under-Secretary, he reminded him of the promise, the great increase and extent of the fur-trade rendering such an Act daily more necessary. The Act to give jurisdiction to the Courts of Upper and Lower Canada had, however, been assented to on the 11th of the preceding month.

Canada Jurisdiction Act.

The first case brought to trial under the Act became celebrated. In the autumn of 1809 William Corrigal was the trader at a Company's post near Eagle Lake. On the 15th of September a party of North-Westers established an encampment about forty yards from the Company's post, under one of their clerks, Aeneas MacDonnell. In the evening an Indian arrived in his canoe to trade with Corrigal and to pay a debt which he owed him. As he was not able to defray the whole amount, Corrigal accepted the canoe in part payment. The Indian requested that it might be lent to him for a few days, which was agreed to; and the Indian spent the night at the post with his canoe. In the morning he received in advance some more merchandise, such as clothing for his family and ammunition for his winter hunt. When he finally departed, three of the Company's servants were sent down to the wharf with the canoe and the goods. On their

* Canadian Archives.





Voyageurs Tracking Canoes up a Rapid.

way they were observed by a number of Northmen, including MacDonnell, who went immediately down to the lake, armed with a sword and accompanied by a voyageur named Adhemer, armed with a brace of pistols. Upon pretence that the unhappy Red man was indebted to the North-West company, they proceeded to seize and drag away the canoe and the merchandise to their own wharf. Corrigal observing this, commanded two of his men, James Tate and John Corrigal, to go into the water and prevent the seizure, and as they approached on this mission MacDonnell drew his sword and struck two blows at Tate's head. The latter was unarmed, and warded the blows with his wrist, which was severely gashed. He then received another deep wound in the neck, which felled him to the ground. In the meantime Adhemer had seized John Corrigal (who was also unarmed) and presenting a cocked pistol at his head, swore that if he went near the canoe he would blow out his brains.

Several of the Company's servants who were near the spot, perceiving what was going on, and observing that the rest of MacDonnell's men were collecting with arms, ran up to their own house, which was only about forty or fifty yards from the lake, for weapons of defence. MacDonnell next attacked John Corrigal, who to escape him ran into the lake. Finding the water too deep, however, he was soon obliged to make a turn towards the shore. His pursuer wading after him, aimed a blow at him with his sword, cut his arm above the elbow and laid the bone bare. He followed this up with a tremendous blow at his head, which Robert Leask, one of the Company's servants, fortunately warded off with the paddle of his canoe, which was cut in two by the blow. The North-West leader in a fury now attacked another servant named Essen, aimed a blow at him with his sword, which, however, only struck his hat off. But in making his escape Essen fell into the water. Before he could recover himself another Canadian aimed a blow at his head with a heavy axe, which missed its aim, but dislocated his shoulder, so that he could make no use of his arm for over two months after this affray.

MacDonnell and Adhemer, the one with a drawn sword and the other with a cocked pistol, continued to pursue several other of the Company's servants towards the fort, when one of them, named John Mowat, whom MacDonnell had previously struck with his sword, and was preparing to strike again, shot MacDonnell on the spot.

Killing of MacDonnell.

MacDonnell's body was carried away, and the parties separated, Corrigal fearing a further attack. On the 24th, a partner of the North-West Company, named Haldane, arrived in a canoe with ten men, and on the following day another partner, McLellan, also arrived. They came to the gates of the stockades, behind which Corrigal and his men had barricaded themselves, and demanded the man who had shot MacDonnell. They declared that if the person was not immediately given up they would either shoot every one of the Company's men, or get the Indians to kill them, were it even to cost them a keg of brandy for each of their heads! Mowat now stepped forward and acknowledged that he was the man, and that he would shoot MacDonnell again in the same circumstances. Much to his surprise the North-Westers announced their intention of taking him and two witnesses down to Montreal for trial. Mowat was thereupon put in irons. From the 2nd of October, when they arrived at Rainy Lake, the unhappy man was generally kept in irons from six in the morning till eight in the evening, and during the night until the 14th of December. During the whole winter he was kept in close confinement, and the two witnesses, Tate and Leask, who had voluntarily accompanied him, were themselves subjected to much insult and indignity, and were obliged to submit to every species of drudgery and labour in order to obtain a bare subsistence. In June the whole party, including Corrigal, arrived at Fort William, the chief trading-post rendezvous of the North-Westers. Here Mowat was imprisoned in a close and miserable dungeon, about six feet square, without any window or light of any kind whatsoever, and when he finally reached Montreal he was in a most pitiable condition. The witnesses were seized on a charge of aiding and abetting

the murder of MacDonnell, and this upon the oath of one of the North-West half-breeds. The Hudson's Bay Company had at this time no agent or correspondent at Montreal or any place in Canada, and it was not until the end of November that the Honourable Adventurers heard of the prosecution being carried on against their servants. Immediate steps were taken for their protection, and counsel engaged for the defence. Mowat and his witnesses were indicted for murder. The grand jury found a true bill against Mowat, but not against the others, and Tate and Leask were accordingly discharged.*

Trial of Mowat.

In spite of the evidence, the jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter. The judge, however, had charged them to find it murder. Mowat was sentenced to be imprisoned six months and branded on the hand with a hot iron. After his discharge, two years from the time he was first put in irons at Eagle Lake, Mowat proceeded from Canada to the United States in order to return to England, but was never heard of again. He is supposed to have been drowned by the breaking of the ice in one of the rivers he had to cross on his way.

Such was the situation in the early years of the century. At this time there rose a name destined to be of more than local fame, that of Thomas Douglas, fifth Earl of Selkirk, a young man of benevolent character, whose feelings had been deeply moved by the sufferings of his countrymen in the Scottish Highlands. Nor was the nobleman's compassion excited without cause. A compulsory exodus of the inhabitants of the mountainous regions in the county of Sutherland was in progress. The tale of expulsion of a vast number of poor tenantry from the estates of the Duchess of Sutherland, which they and their ancestors had looked upon as their own without the necessity of rent and taxes, may be heard to-day from some white-haired old grandfather, who had it from the

The Earl of Selkirk.

* It has been noted that several partners of the North-West concern were upon the grand jury which found the bill of indictment, and out of four judges who sat upon the bench, two were nearly related to individuals of that association.

lips of his sire, in the far north of Scotland. The system of rents and land-management as it prevails to-day all over the Highlands had only then been put in force, and the squatters were driven to seek their homes as best they might in the remote and sequestered places of the earth. Selkirk encouraged this emigration as the only remedy; and having endeavoured in vain to secure the active co-operation of the Government, resolved to settle a colony on waste lands

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LORD SELKIRK.

granted him in Prince Edward Island. The better to ensure success, he went in person to oversee the whole enterprise. Gathering together about eight hundred of these poor people, who bade a melancholy farewell to their heather-robed hills, they arrived at their future home early in September, 1803.

Selkirk visited Montreal in this and also in the following year on matters connected with his philanthropic undertaking,

and on both occasions evinced the heartiest interest in the great territory to the north-west which formed the theatre of action for the two rival fur-trading companies.

The Prince Edward Island colony continuing to prosper, Lord Selkirk now conceived the plan of forming a colony on the banks of the Red River, in Rupert's Land.* In order to execute his project with a greater assurance of success, he again, in 1805, addressed the British Government and nation, pointing out the successful issue of his colony as an example of the excellent results which would attend a further exodus of the superfluous population.

Time went on and the execution of the plan being still in abeyance, the great decline in Hudson's Bay stock suggested an idea to Selkirk. He submitted the charter to several of the highest legal authorities in England, and got from them the following:

"We are of the opinion that the grant of the said contained charter is good, and that it will include all the country, the waters of which run into Hudson's Bay, as ascertained by geographical observations.

"We are of opinion that an individual holding from the Hudson's Bay Company a lease or grant in fee simple of any part of their territory, will be entitled to all the ordinary rights of landed property in England, and will be entitled to prevent other persons from occupying any part of the lands; from cutting down timber and fishing in the adjoining waters (being such as a private right of fishing may subsist in), and may (if he can peaceably or otherwise in due course of law) dispossess them of any buildings which they have recently erected within the limits of their property.

Legal opinion on the Company's charter

"We are of opinion that the grant of the civil and criminal jurisdiction is valid, though it is not granted to the Company,

* Already, in April, 1802, Lord Selkirk had addressed a letter and memorial to Lord Pelham, the Home Secretary, detailing the practicability of promoting emigration to Rupert's Land. "To a colony in these territories," he concluded, "the channel of trade must be the river of Port Nelson."

but to the Governor and Council at their respective establishments. We cannot recommend, however, it to be exercised so as to affect the lives or limbs of criminals. It is to be exercised by the Governor and Council as judges, who are to proceed according to the laws of England.

'The Company may appoint a sheriff to execute judgments and do his duty as in England.

"We are of opinion that the sheriff, in case of resistance to his authority, may collect the population to his assistance, and put arms into the hands of his servants for defence against attack, and to assist in enforcing the judgments of the courts; but such powers cannot be exercised with too much circumspection.

"We are of opinion that all persons will be subject to the jurisdiction of the court, who reside or are found within the territories over which it extends.

"We do not think the Canada Jurisdiction Act (43 George III.) gives jurisdiction within the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company, the same being within the jurisdiction of their own governors and council.*

"We are of opinion that the Governor (in Hudson's) might under the authority of the Company, appoint constables and other officers for the preservation of the peace and that the officers so appointed would have the same duties and privileges as the same officers in England, so far as these duties and privileges may be applicable to their situation in the territories of the Company." This was signed by Sir Samuel Ronully, Mr. Justice Holroyd, W. M. Cruise, J. Scarlett and John Bell. There could be thus no question of Selkirk's right. The Company's charter, amongst other provisions, expressly forbids all English subjects from entering, without license or authority, upon the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Governor and Company only are empowered to grant

"* In the course of a letter reporting on the disputes between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North-Westers, Commissioner Coltman attributed the disasters in the territories to the Company having held in abeyance its right to jurisdiction and that this neglect was the reason for passing the act of 1803. This letter is in the Canadian Archives, *v.* Report 1892.

such authority and on them also is conferred the right of establishing castles, fortifications, forts, garrisons, colonies, plantations, towns and villages, in any parts or places within the limits of their territory. They had also the right of sending ships of war, men or ammunition, to their colonies, fortifications or plantations, and of appointing governors, commanders and officers over them.

Selkirk began by purchasing several thousand pounds worth of shares in the Company.

Late in 1810 he made a formal proposition to the Company, a proposition previously made and rejected, for a settlement to be made within its territory. This time some of the Honourable Adventurers began to see that the scheme might be fraught with salvation for themselves.

Lord Selkirk was asked to lay before the committee the terms on which he would accept a grant of land within the Hudson's Bay territories, "specifying what restrictions he would be prepared to consent to be imposed on the settlers." Also what security he would offer to the Company against any injury to its trade or to its rights and privileges.

Lord Selkirk responded to this, and his proposals were agreed to, subject to final approbation of a general court of all the Adventurers.

It now dawned upon the wiser spirits that here was being offered them the means for the Company's salvation. Nevertheless, the traditional opposition of the Company to any project of the kind still lingered, and was not easily disposed of. For weeks the meetings in committee resounded with appeals to "traditional policy," to "loyalty to the noble, the ancient founders," to "a spirit of reverence for the history of our Company," but all to no purpose. Selkirk was to carry the day. A general court was convened, by public notice, in May 1811, when the stockholders were informed that the Governor and Committee considered it beneficial to their general interests to grant Lord Selkirk 116,000 square miles of their territory, on condition that he should establish a colony and furnish, on certain

Selkirk's project.

terms, from amongst the settlers, such labourers as would be required by the Company in their trade.

In order to give the partners a further opportunity of making themselves fully informed of the nature of the proposed measure, an adjournment of the court took place. In the meanwhile notice was given to all the stockholders that the terms of the proposed grant were left at the secretary's office for their inspection.

This interval was the opportunity of McGillivray and his friends.

In certain quarters, no pains or misrepresentations were spared by persons associated with the North-West Company to prejudice the public mind against it. The newspapers teemed with falsehoods representing the country as cold or barren, as a dreary waste or interminable forest, unfit to be the abode of men and incapable of improvement. Selkirk was accosted in Pall Mall by a friend who remarked: "By God, sir, if you are bent on doing something futile, why do you not sow tares at home in order to reap wheat, or plough the desert of Sahara, which is nearer."

Old servants of the Company came forward to dispel these calumnies, and seeing their first falsehoods destroyed, Selkirk's enemies now proceeded to follow new tactics. They spoke with feigned alarm concerning the hostile disposition of the aborigines; they lamented with affected sympathy and humanity the injuries and slaughters to which the colonists would be exposed from the savages.

At the adjourned meeting the proposition was again discussed amidst the greatest excitement and tumult, and adopted. A memorial or protest was however entered against the measure, bearing the signature of six of the proprietors.

Of these six signing the protest, three were persons closely connected with and interested in the rival commercial concerns of the North-West Company of Montreal; and two of the three were, at the very moment, avowed London agents of that association. These had become proprietors of Hud-

son's Bay stock only eight and forty hours before the general meeting. They were not indeed possessed of it long enough to entitle them to vote at the meeting; but their names now being entered in the Company's books, though the ink was scarcely dry with which they were inserted, they felt themselves competent to formally raise their voices in condemnation of those measures which the committee of directors unanimously, and the general court by a great majority, had approved of.

Opposition by agents of the North-West Company.

Their design in acquiring the Company's stock was obvious. However circuitous the stratagem might be, it was clear that they had thus become proprietors of one commercial company for the purpose of advancing the fortunes of another, and a rival concern.* The stratagem did not altogether fail, for Lord Selkirk's agents were yet to encounter much friction in distant quarters supposed to be friendly, and required to be obedient to the orders of the Company.

When the vote was taken, it was found that for the question there appeared holders of stock valued at £29,937; against it, £14,823. The Earl, himself, voted "for"—£4,087; the principal opponent of the scheme being one William Thwaytes, whose interest was represented at £9,233.

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* "I have," writes Sir Alexander Mackenzie from London, 13th April, 1812, "finally settled with that Lord (Selkirk). After having prepared a bill to carry him before the Lord Chancellor, it was proposed to my solicitor by the solicitor of his Lordship that one-third of the stock that was purchased on joint account before I went to America, amounting to £47,000, and the balance of cash in his Lordship's hands, belonging to me, should be given up to me; of this I accepted, though I might have obliged his Lordship to make over to me one-third of the whole purchase made by him in this stock, which at one time I was determined to do, having been encouraged thereto by the house of Suffolk Lane and countenanced by that of Mark Lane. But these houses thought it prudent to desist from any further purchases."

Mackenzie says that by a verbal understanding with Mr. McGillivray, his purchase of the Hudson's Bay stock belonged to the North-West Company, and that, if Mr. McGillivray himself had been there, a sum of £30,000 might have been invested in that stock, "all of which Lord Selkirk purchased, and if he persists in his present scheme, it will be the dearest he yet made.

"He will put the North-West Company to a greater expense than you seem to apprehend, and had the Company sacrificed £20,000 which might have secured a preponderance in the stock of Hudson's Bay Co., it would have been money well spent."

At this meeting a memorial was read violently opposing the scheme, signed by Thwaytes and four or five others. According to them, the main objections were:—(*a*) Impolitic; (*b*) Consideration inadequate; (*c*) Grant asked for very large proportion of Company's holding, viz.: 70,000 square miles, or about 45,000,000 acres; (*d*) Should be a public sale, if any, not a private contract with a member of the Company; (*e*) No penalty for failure to find settlers; (*f*) Colonization unfavourable to the fur-trade; private traffic would be carried on with the United States of America.

The Earl proposed to find a number of effective men as servants to the Hudson's Bay Company in return for a grant of land, viz., two hundred men for ten years, from 1812, who would every year be ready to embark between May 1st and July 1st at an appointed place in Scotland.

The Company were to pay wages to each man not exceeding £20. Should the Earl fail, he agreed to forfeit £10 per man short of two hundred. As to proposed grants of land to settlers, two hundred acres were to be given to labourers or artificers; one thousand acres to a master of a trading-house. The Company were, of course, to have full rights of access to all the surrendered districts.

The customs duties, exports and imports, payable by settlers were not to exceed five per cent., at Port Nelson, unless it happened that a higher duty was levied at Quebec. The duties so to be levied were to be applied to the expense of Government police, communication between Lake Winnipeg and Port Nelson, etc., and not to be taken as profits for the Company. The show of hands was in favour of the proposal; but a protest was handed in to the Governor by Thwaytes and others. In spite of this, on the 13th of June, the deed was signed, sealed and delivered by the secretary on behalf of the Company.

Earl Selkirk's proposal accepted.

The lands were defined by deed as situate between 52° 30′ north latitude and 102° 30′ west longitude, a map being affixed to the deed.

In reading this protest, one who was ignorant of the true state of affairs would have been led to believe that the partners concerned had no object so dear to them as the welfare and prosperity of the Hudson's Bay Company. These gentlemen appeared to be animated by the most thorough devotion and zeal, as they stood together declaiming in loud, earnest tones against the errors into which their beloved Company was falling, and pouring out their sympathy to the emigrant settlers who might be lured to their destruction by establishing themselves on the lands so granted "out of reach," to employ their own phrase, "of all those aids and comforts which are derived from civil society;" and so it did truly appear to many then as it has done since. But let us examine those signatures, and lo, the wolf obtrudes himself basking in the skin of a lamb!

The grant was thus confirmed. The opposition had found itself powerless, and Selkirk was put into possession of a territory only 5,115 square miles less than the entire area of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.*

The grant secured, Selkirk at once despatched agents to Ireland and throughout the highlands of Scotland, to engage servants, some for the Company's service, others for general labourers in the colony. These last were known as "his lordship's servants," and were engaged for a term of years, at the expiration of which they became entitled to one hundred acres of land, free of cost. They were placed under the charge of Miles McDonnell, who received a joint appointment from Selkirk and the Company, as first Governor of the new colony.

The first section of the immigrant party arrived at York Factory late in the autumn of 1811.† This post was then in

* The district thus granted was called Assiniboia, a name undoubtedly derived from the Assiniboine tribe and river, yet alleged by some at the time to be taken from two Gaelic words "osni" and "boia"—the house of Ossian.

† "None of the young men," says McDonnell, "made any progress in learning the Gaelic or Irish language on the voyage. I had some drills of the people with arms, but the weather was generally boisterous, and there were few days when a person could stand steady on deck. There never was a more awkward squad—not a man, or even officer, of the party knew how to put a gun to his eye or had ever fired a shot."

charge of William Auld, who, as we have seen, occupied the position of Superintendent of the Northern Department of Rupert's Land. After a short residence at the fort, where they were treated in a somewhat tyrannical and high-handed fashion by the Governor, who had scant sympathy for the new *régime*, the party were sent forward to Seal Creek, fifty miles up Nelson River. Governor McDonnell and one Hillier, in the character of justice of the peace, accompanied them thither, and preparations were at once made for the erection of a suitable shelter.

Selkirk's immigrants arrive.



STORNAWAY. *(The Hebrides.)*

McDonnell experienced a great deal of trouble during the winter with the men under his charge, for a mutinous spirit broke out, and he was put to his wits' end to enforce discipline. He put it all down to the Glasgow servants. "These Glasgow rascals," he declared to Auld, the Governor of York Factory, "have caused us both much trouble and uneasiness. A more stubborn, litigious and cross-grained lot were never put under any person's care. I cannot think that any liberality of rum or rations could have availed to stop their dissatisfaction. Army and navy discipline is the only thing fit to manage such fierce spirits."

But the Irish of the party were hardly more tractable. On New Year's night, 1812, a violent and unprovoked attack

was made by some of the Irish on a party of Orkneymen, who were celebrating the occasion. Three of the latter were so severely beaten that for a month the surgeon could not report their lives entirely out of danger. Four of the Irishmen concerned in this assault were sent back home. "Worthless blackguards," records the Governor; "the lash may make them serviceable to the Government in the army or navy, but they will never do for us."

On the subject of the Orkney servants of the Company all critics were not agreed. Governor McDonnell's opinion, for instance, was not flattering:—

"There cannot," he reported, "be much improvement made in the country while the Orkneymen form the majority of labourers; they are lazy, spiritless, and ill-disposed—wedded to old habits, strongly prejudiced against any change, however beneficial. It was with the utmost reluctance they could be prevailed on to drink the spruce juice to save themselves from the scurvy; they think nothing of the scurvy, as they are then idle, and their wages run on. . . . It is not uncommon for an Orkneyman to consume six pounds or eight pounds of meat in a day, and some have ate as much in a single meal. This gluttonous appetite, they say, is occasioned by the cold. I entirely discredit the assertion, as I think it rather to be natural to themselves. All the labour I have seen these men do would scarcely pay for the victuals they consume. With twenty-five men belonging to it, the factory was last winter distressed for firewood, and the people sent to tent in the woods.*

* Governor McDonnell's observations are not always to be relied upon. For instance, he says in one report, "I am surprised the Company never directed a survey to be made of the coast on each side of Hudson's Straits. From the appearance of the country there must be many harbours and inlets for vessels to go in case of an accident from ice, want of water, etc. We were often, ourselves, much in doubt for the accomplishment of our voyage, and had we been under the necessity of putting back, must have suffered for want of water. Two of the ships, without any additional expense, might execute this survey on the voyage out, with only the detention of a few days, one taking the north and the other the south shore." Such a survey had been made as early as 1728. Mention has already been made of Captain Coats, who, in 1739, prepared a chart of the Straits and Bay. To some of the older captains in the service, the Straits were as well-known as the harbour of Stromness.

Meanwhile, leaving the shivering immigrants, distrustful of their officers and doubtful of what the future had in store for them, to encamp at Seal Creek, let us turn to the state of affairs amongst the parties concerned elsewhere, particularly amongst the Nor'-Westers. Simon McGillivray, who was agent in London for that Company, watched all Selkirk's acts with the utmost distrust, and kept the partners continually informed of the turn affairs were taking. He assured them that Selkirk's philanthropy was all a cloak, designed to cover up a scheme for the total extinction of the Hudson's Bay Company's rivals. The colony was to be planted to ruin their trade. It was an endeavour to check the physical superiority of the Nor'-Westers and by means of this settlement secure to the Hudson's Bay Company and to himself, not only the extensive and sole trade of the country within their own territories, but a "safe and convenient stepping-stone for monopolizing all the fur-trade of the Far West."

Opposition by the Nor'-Westers.

The partners in Montreal were stirred to action. Regarding Lord Selkirk's motives in this light, they warmly disputed the validity of the Hudson's Bay Company's Charter and of the grants of land made to him. It was decided to bring all the forces of opposition they possessed to bear on this "invasion of their hunting grounds."



CHAPTER XXX.

1812–1815.

The Bois-Brulés—Simon McGillivray's Letter—Frightening the Settlers—A second Brigade—Governor McDonnell's Manifesto—Defection of Northmen to the Company—Robertson's Expedition to Athabasca—Affairs at Red River—Cameron and McDonell in uniform—Cuthbert Grant—Miles McDonnell arrested—Fort William—News brought to the Northmen—Their confiscated account-books—War of 1812 concluded.

There had lately been witnessed the rapid growth of a new class—sprung from the loins of Red man and European. Alert, rugged, turbulent, they evinced at the same time a passionate love of the life and manners of the wilderness, and a fierce intractability which could hardly fail to cause occasional uneasiness in the minds of their masters. To this class had been given the name of Métis, or Bois-Brulés. They were principally the descendants of the French voyageurs of the North-West concern, who had allied themselves with Indian women and settled down on the shore of some lake or stream in the interior. Amongst these half-breeds hunters and trappers came, and at a later period a number of Englishmen and Scotchmen, hardly less strongly linked to a wild, hardy life than themselves. These also took Indian wives, and they and their children spoke of themselves as neither English, Scotch, or Indian, but as belonging to the "New Nation."

The Bois-Brulés.

From 1812 to 1821 the North-West concern absorbed all the labours and exacted the loyalty of the increasing class of Bois-Brulés. The Hudson's Bay Company was exclusively an English company, and their Scotch and English servants had left few traces of an alliance with the aborigines. As the posts in the interior began to multiply, and the men were thus cut off from the larger society which obtained at York, Cumberland and Moose factories, and were thrown more upon their own resources, a laxer discipline prevailed, and the



A Bois-Brulé.

example of their neighbours was followed. A time was to come when the "Orkney half-breeds" equalled in point of numbers those of the French Bois-Brulés.

There were yet few half-breeds of English extraction. The Bois-Brulés were passionately attached to the North-West company, who were quick to recognize their value as agents amongst the Indians. The idea of nationality, so far from

being frowned upon, was encouraged amongst them. So much for the instruments which the Company proposed to employ in Montreal.

It was only natural that amongst this rude race there should arise a leader, a half-breed to whose superior ability and natural advantages was added an education in Montreal, the seat of the co-partnery. Cuthbert Grant, which was the name this individual bore, was known far and wide amongst the hunters and trappers of Rupert's Land, and everywhere commanded homage and respect. He had risen to be one of the most enterprising and valued agents of the Nor'-Westers, and was constantly admitted to their councils.

On the 22nd of May, 1811, at which period the matter was in embryo in London, Simon McGillivray had frankly declared to Miles McDonnell, agent to Lord Selkirk, that he was "determined to give all the opposition in his power, whatever might be the consequences," because, in his opinion, "such a settlement struck at the root of the North-West company, which it was intended to ruin."*

By way of argument, this gentleman took it upon himself to inform the Hudson's Bay Company that the proposed settlement was foredoomed to destruction, inasmuch as it "must at all times lie at the mercy of the Indians," who would not be bound by treaties, and that "one North-West Company's interpreter would be able at any time to set the Indians against the settlers and destroy them."

Selkirk was now informed that there were several clerks who had been many years in the service of the Northmen, and who were disaffected in that service. They grumbled at not having been sooner promoted to the proprietary—that the claims of the old and faithful were too often passed over for those of younger men of little experience, because they were

* The precise spot was well chosen by Selkirk, had his object been only the confusion and discomfiture of the North-Westers. It was the great depot of the latter for the preparation of pemmican. Were the region to become colonized it would slowly but surely cut off the buffalo, from which pemmican was made, and eventually force the North-Westers to import from Canada, at ruinous expense, the chief part of the provisions requisite for their trading expeditions.

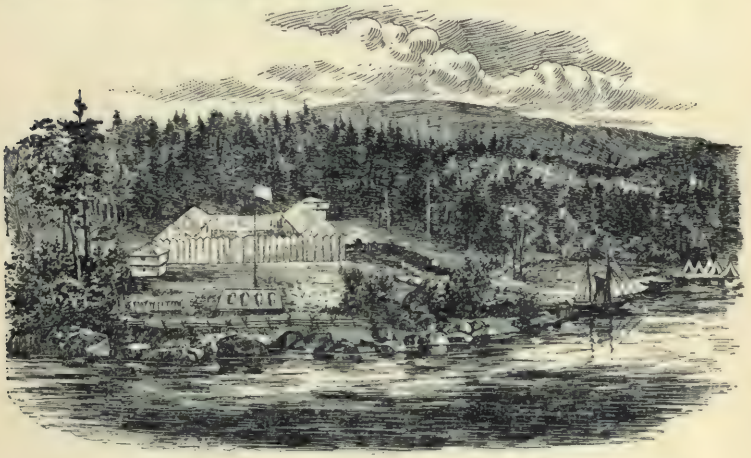
related to the partners. The Earl was not slow to avail himself of this advantage. It became a matter of importance to persuade as many as possible of these dissatisfied spirits to join his scheme, by the offer of large salaries, and several accepted his offer with alacrity. Amongst the most enterprising was one Colin Robertson, a trader who had often ventured his life amongst the tribes and half-breeds, to forward the interests of his establishment. He possessed a perfect knowledge of the interior and of the fur-trade, and to him Lord Selkirk entrusted the chief management of the latter for the Company. Robertson was well convinced of the superiority of the Canadian voyageurs over the Orkneymen, in the management of canoes, for example, and he proceeded to engage a number of them in Montreal at a much higher wage than they had received hitherto.

Defections from the North-West Company.

To Robertson's counsels must be ascribed much of the invigoration which now began to mark the policy of the Company. His letters to the Company were full of a commonsense and a fighting spirit. "Let us carry the trade to Athabasca," he said; and he proceeded to demonstrate how all rivalry could be annihilated. The strength and weakness of his rivals were familiar to him, and he was well aware how much depended on the Indians themselves. They could and would deal with whom they chose; Robertson determined they should deal henceforth, not with the North-West, but with the Hudson's Bay Company.

The Northmen had been for years continually pressing to the West. They were doing a thriving trade on the Columbia River, in Oregon, where they had a lucrative post; they had a post to the south of that in California, and to the north as far as New Archangel. In the second decade of the century the North-West Association had over three hundred Canadians in its employ on the Pacific slope, sending three or four ships annually to London by way of Cape Horn. In 1810 they had a competitor in the post of Astoria, founded by John Jacob Astor, a fur-monopolist of New York. Astor had made overtures to the North-West partners, which had been

declined; whereupon he induced about twenty Canadians to leave them and enter his service. He despatched two expeditions, one overland and the other by sea, around Cape Horn. But the founder of Astoria had not foreseen that the breaking out of war between Great Britain and America would upset all his plans. Fort Astoria, in the fortunes of war, changed hands and became Fort George; and although the post was, by the Treaty of Ghent, restored, the Canadians and Scotchmen had returned to their old employers and interests. In a few years the Hudson's Bay Company was to control the chief part of the fur-trade of the Pacific Coast.



FORT GEORGE. *(Astoria—as it was in 1813.)*

None of the Company's servants had yet penetrated as far west as Athabasca. Yet it was the great northern department of Rupert's Land—a country which, if not flowing with milk and honey, swarmed with moose and beaver. To Athabasca, therefore, Robertson went.

This first expedition was highly successful. Never had the natives received such high prices for their furs. Seduced from their allegiance to the Northmen, and dimly recalling the tales of their sires, regarding whilom journeys to the posts of the Great Company, they rallied in scores and hundreds round its standard. The news spread far and wide. Other tribes heard and marvelled. They, too, had listened to

The Company in Athabasca.

stories of the white traders, who far away, past rivers and plain and mountain, sat still in their forts and waited for the Red man to bring them furs. Now the Mountain was coming to Mahomet. Many of them resolved to keep their furs until the traders from the Bay came amongst them, too; and, gnashing their teeth, the Northmen were compelled to give them still higher prices, if they would obtain the goods of the savages, and secure their wavering loyalty.



ARRIVAL OF THE UPLAND INDIANS.

Other measures became incumbent upon them to perform. They were obliged to send double the quantity of merchandise into the interior, and they were also to supply extra provisions to their own men, and to raise their wages; while several clerks were elected partners. Cost what it might, the Northmen were determined to fight to the end.

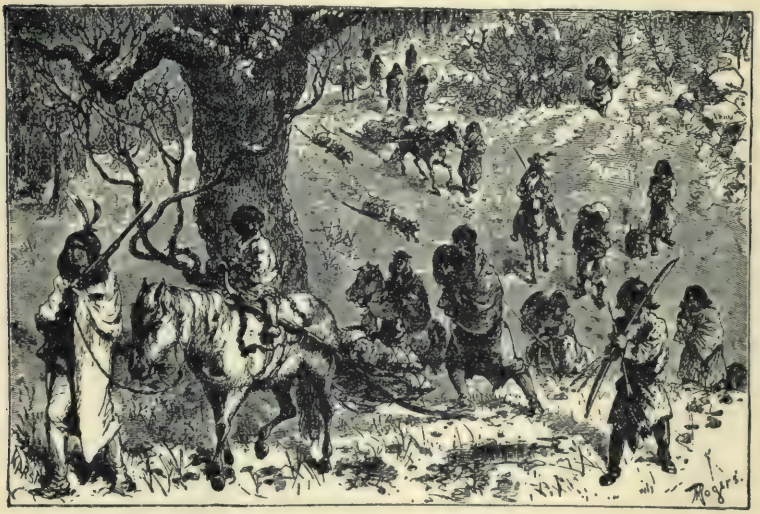
It has been shewn in preceding pages how the step of removing from Grand Portage had been anticipated as far back as 1785, when Edward Umfreville was sent to reconnoitre a site for a new fort on British territory. None appeared more suited to the purposes of the Nor'-Westers than this; the river was deep and of easy access, and offered a safe harbour for shipping. On the other hand, it was situated in low, swampy soil; but by dint of great labour and perseverance they succeeded in draining the marshes and in converting to solidity the loose and yielding soil, accomplishing on a small scale much of what Czar Peter was obliged to do on a large scale with the foundation of Petersburg.

When all was finished, Fort William as it was called,* presented an engaging exterior. It possessed the appearance of a fort, having a palisade fifteen feet high, while the number of dwellings it enclosed, gave it, from a distance, the appearance of a charming village. In the centre of the spacious enclosure rose a large wooden building, constructed with considerable pretensions to elegance, a long piazza or portico, at an elevation of five feet from the ground and surmounted by a balcony, fronting the building its entire length. The great hall or saloon was situated in the middle of this building. At each extremity of this apartment were two rooms, designed for the use of the two principal agents, and the steward and his staff, the last named official being a highly important personage. The kitchen and servants' rooms were in the basement. On either side of the main edifice was another of similar but less lofty extent, each divided by a corridor running through its length and containing a dozen cosy bedrooms. One was destined for the wintering partners, the other for the clerks. On the east of the square stood another building similar to the ones named, and applied to the same purpose; also a warehouse, where the furs were inspected and packed for shipment. In the rear of these were the lodging house of

Fort William.

* In honour of William McGillivray, principal partner of the concern.

the guides, another fur warehouse, and lastly, a powder magazine, a substantial structure of stone with a metal roof. A great bastion, at an angle of the fort, commanded a view of Lake Superior. There were other buildings to the westward, stores, a gaol, workshops of the carpenter, cooper, blacksmith and tinsmith, with spacious yards for the shelter, repair and construction of canoes. Near the gate of the fort, which faced the south, were the quarters of the physician and the chief clerks, and over the gates was a guard-house. The river being of considerable depth at the entrance, the Company had a wharf built extending the whole length of the fort,



ON THE WAY TO FORT WILLIAM.

for the discharge of the vessels it maintained on the lake, and for the transport of its furs from Fort William to Sault Ste. Marie or merchandise and provisions from the latter place to Fort William. The land behind the fort and on both sides was cleared and under cultivation.

At the beginning of spring the "first brigade" of immigrants resumed its journey to the Red River Valley, arriving at what is now known as Point Douglas, late in August, 1812. Hardly had they reached this spot than they were immediately thrown into the greatest fright and disorder. A band of

armed men, painted, disfigured and apparelled like savages, confronted this little band of colonists and bade them halt. They were told briefly that they were unwelcome visitors in that region, and must depart. The colonists might have been urged to make a stand, but to the terrors of hostile Indian and half-breed was added that of prospective starvation, for none would sell them provisions thereabouts. The painted warriors, who were North-West company Métis in disguise, urged them to proceed to Pembina, where they would be unharmed, and offered to conduct them there. They acquiesced, and the pilgrimage, seventy miles farther on, was resumed. At Pembina they passed the winter in tents, according to the Indian fashion, subsisting on the products of the chase, in common with the natives.

The immigrants at Red River.

When spring came it was decided to again venture to plant the colony on the banks of the Red River. Means were found to mollify their opponents, and log-houses were built, and patches of prairie sown with corn. A small quantity of seed wheat, obtained at Fort Alexander, yielded them handsome returns at harvest time and the lot of the settlers seemed brighter; but nevertheless they decided to repair to Pembina for the winter, and saving their corn, live by hunting until the spring.

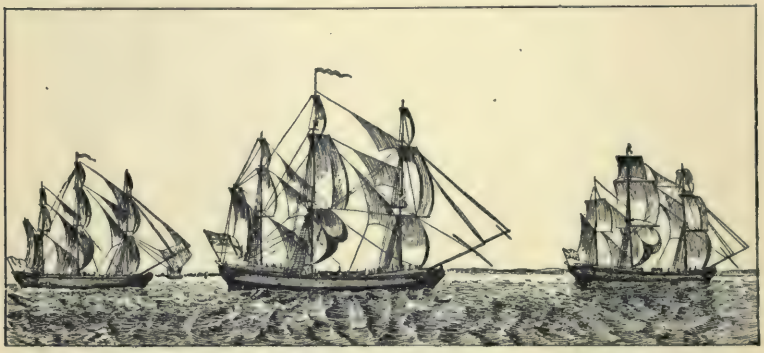
While affairs were thus proceeding with the colonists, Lord Selkirk, in 1813, paid a visit to Ireland, where he secured a large number of people as servants for the fur-trade and the colony, in addition to those engaged in the Highlands.*

Selkirk infused new life into the Company, and a number of plans for its prosperity emanated from his brain. For a long time the Company had had much at heart the erection of a new factory in place of York Factory, but they had not thitherto had sufficient strength of hands to accomplish this. Selkirk wrote to McDonnell that if the settlers were

* "It will never do," wrote Governor McDonnell to his chief, "to take the colonists from among the Company's servants. The Orkneymen are so averse to labour that they prefer the Company's service to agriculture, and all being engaged in the name of the Company they object to serve in the colony, thinking it a separate concern."

employed in that object for the winter, the Company stood ready to pay their wages. "Perhaps," he added, "it would be more advisable to do this than to make an abortive attempt to reach the interior. . . . . I believe that I mentioned that I am anxious to have the soundings of Nelson River taken, from Seal Island down to the open sea. I beg that while you are at York, you will try to induce some of the officers of the ships to go and make the survey. I will pay a handsome premium to the individual who accomplishes it."

On June 28, the Company's ships, the *Prince of Wales* and the *Eddystone*, sailed out of the little harbour of Stromness. They were accompanied by two other vessels, one a brig



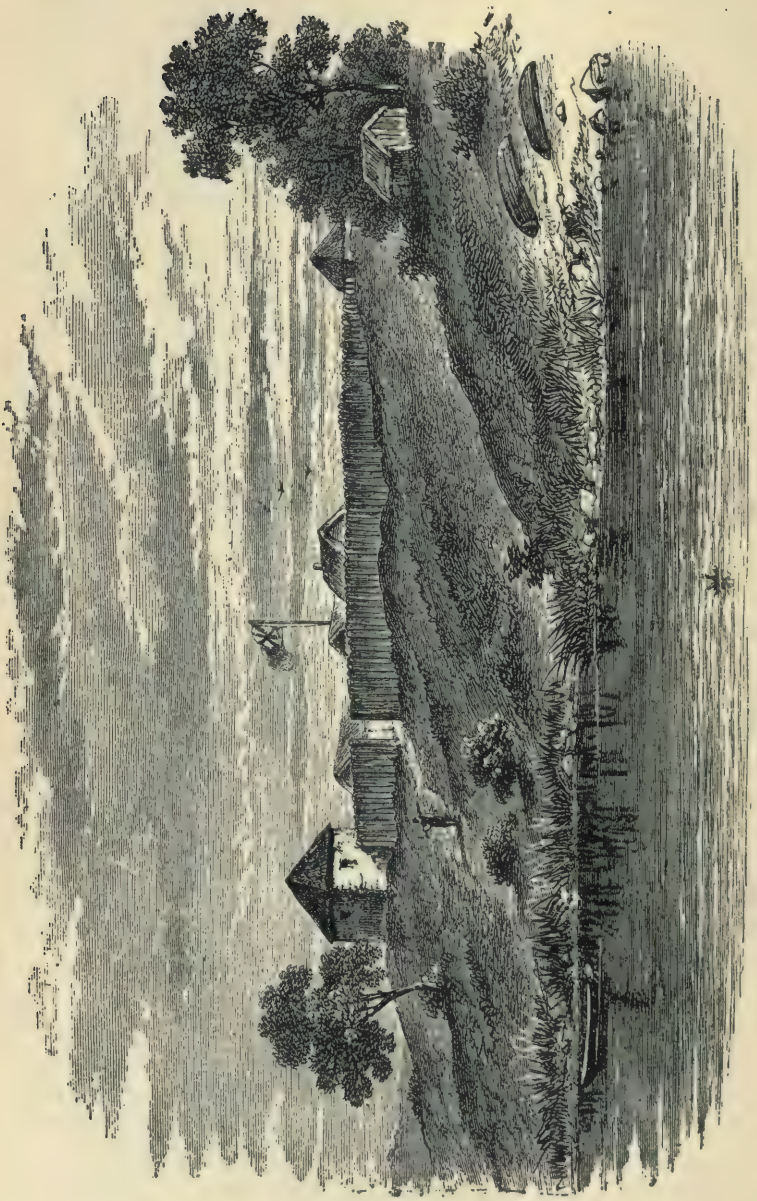
THE COMPANY'S SHIPS IN 1812. *(From the picture in Hudson's Bay House.)*

bound for the Moravian missions on the Labrador coast, and the other his Majesty's sloop of war *Brazen*, as armed convoy. The voyage was by no means as monotonous as such voyages usually were. On board the *Prince of Wales*, typhoid fever of a virulent character broke out, causing a panic and a number of deaths, marine funerals being a daily occurrence. As for the *Eddystone*, an insurrection occurred; during which the sailors and passengers between decks sought to obtain possession of the ship and dispose of her, together with cargo and effects to France or Spain, or to the ships or colonies of those hostile countries. The captain was, however informed of the plan, and immediately placed armed men to guard the hatches, loaded the quarter gun with grape shot

Irish colonists brought out.

and coolly awaited the advent on deck of the conspirators. These appeared in due course, but were quick to perceive themselves completely non-plussed and retired below in confusion.

On the 12th of August the little fleet found an anchorage in Churchill River, in close proximity to the new fort Prince of Wales. Here the immigrants were landed, and after a short rest were sent forward, some on foot and others by boat, to a place known as Colony Creek. Here they built log cabins, and in their weak, unacclimatized state, drew together to pass the winter in those hyperborean regions. In order to receive the scant rations dealt out to them by the Company at the fort, they were obliged to perform a journey of thirty miles on snowshoes each week. But the trials and hardships of the poor wanderers, amongst which was the deprivation of the locks of their guns "in order that they should not kill the Company's partridges," came to an end in April, when their gun-locks were restored and they took up their journey to York Factory, slaying innumerable game as they went. Here they met from the Chief Factor, Cook, a hospitable reception, and continuing their journeyings after a short halt, reached Fort Douglas in the early autumn. Governor McDonnell welcomed the members of this second brigade and proceeded to allot to each head of a family one hundred acres of land and an Indian pony. A few days later they were called together, and after each had been regaled with a glass of spirits, he was furnished with a musket, bayonet and ammunition. They were told they must offer an armed resistance to their tormentors and aggressors should they again appear, and admonished that the strong could dictate to the weak. Notwithstanding, the colonists could not but marvel at the plentiful lack of preparation for the agricultural pursuits which they had intended to follow in this remote region. There were no farm implements, nor was there metal of which these could be fashioned, unless it was the formidable battery of field-guns, or the plentiful supply of muskets and bayonets. At Fort Douglas, under the circumstances, the colonists could remain but a short time; it was necessary for



FORT DOUGLAS, RED RIVER. *(From a drawing by Lord Selkirk.)*

them to resort, as their forerunners had done, to Pembina, so as to be within convenient distance of the buffalo.

In the spring of 1814, the colonists, after a winter rendered miserable by the jealousy and unfriendliness of the Indians and half-breeds, returned to Red River in a state of great destitution, resolved never to return again to Pembina, no matter what their circumstances.

But a step had been taken during that winter by Governor McDonnell which was to reverberate throughout the English-speaking world. Incensed at the boycotting of the colonists and stirred to action by their condition, he issued from Fort Daer, which was the Company's post erected at Pembina, the following proclamation:

Whereas, the Right Honourable Thomas, Earl of Selkirk, is anxious to provide for the families at present forming settlements on his lands at Red River and those on the way to it, passing the winter at York and Churchill Forts in Hudson's Bay, as also those who are expected to arrive next autumn, rendering it a necessary and indispensable part of my duty to provide for their support. In the yet uncultivated state of the country, the ordinary resources derived from the buffalo and other wild animals hunted within the territory, are not deemed more than adequate for the requisite supply.

Whereas, it is hereby ordered that no person trading furs or provisions within the territory for the Honourable the Hudson's Bay Company, or the North-West Company, or any individual or unconnected traders or persons whatever, shall take any provisions, either of flesh, fish, grain or vegetables, procured or raised within the said territory, by water or land carriage, for one twelvemonth from the date hereof, save and except what may be judged necessary for the trading parties at this present time within the territory, to carry them to their respective destinations; and who may, on due application to me, obtain a license for the same.

Governor McDonnell's proclamation.

The provisions procured and raised as above shall be taken for the use of the colony; and that no loss shall accrue to the parties concerned, they will be paid for by British bills at the customary rates. And be it hereby further made known that whosoever shall be detected in attempting to convey out, or shall aid or assist in carrying out, or attempting to carry out, any provisions prohibited as above, either by water or land, shall be taken into custody and prosecuted as the laws in such cases direct; and the provisions so taken, as well as any goods and chattels, of

what nature soever, which may be taken along with them, and also the craft, carriages and cattle instrumental in conveying away the same to any part out to any settlement on Red River, shall be forfeited.

Given under my hand at Fort Daer (Pembina), the 8th day of January, 1814.

(Signed) MILES McDONNELL, *Governor.*
(By order of the Governor).

(Signed) JOHN SPENCER, *Secretary.*

A copy of this proclamation was despatched in all haste to Fort William, where the partners met in the spring. It excited the greatest indignation and bitterness. It was now determined to seduce and inveigle away as many of the colonists as could be induced to join the North-West standard, and after they should have thus diminished their means of defence, to exhort the Indians of Lac Rouge, Fond du Lac and other places, to rise and destroy the settlement. It was likewise their avowed intention to seize the Governor and carry him to Montreal as a prisoner, by way of degrading the authority under which the colony was established, in the eyes of the natives of that country.

Among the partners of the North-West concern who received their instructions from this general annual meeting at Fort William, were Duncan Cameron and Alexander McDonell, and these were the persons selected by the partnership to superintend and execute the plans entered into against the Red River colony. On the 5th of August the last named person wrote to a fellow-partner at Montreal from one of the portages lying between Lake Superior and the place of his winter destination in the interior, to which he was then proceeding: "You see myself, and our mutual friend, Mr. Cameron, so far on our way to commence open hostilities against the enemy in Red River. Much is expected from us, and if we believe some—perhaps too much. One thing is certain, that we will do our best to defend what we consider our rights in the interior. Something serious will undoubtedly take place. Nothing but the complete downfall of the colony will satisfy some, by fair or foul means—a most

Hostilities planned by the North-West concern.

desirable object if it can be accomplished. So here is at them, with all my heart and energy."

McDonell and his co-partner accordingly proceeded towards their destination, and arrived about the end of August at a trading post (called by them Fort Gibraltar) belonging to the North-West concern, situated at the Forks, within half a mile of the Red River settlement. Cameron remained here during the winter, while his partner, McDonell, proceeded farther into the interior, returning in the month of May with a party of Cree Indians from a considerable distance, for a purpose which is now obvious.

Cameron, to whom his associates appear to have confided the task of opposing, upon the spot, the further progress of colonization, was well qualified to perform such a service. He began by ingratiating himself amongst several of the heads of families in the settlement, and being able to converse with many of them in their native Gaelic tongue, by degrees he gained their confidence and good opinions. He frequently invited them to his house, and, in short, took every means to secure their favour. They saw no reason to suspect his intentions; and thus the influence which he gradually acquired over many of their members, during the autumn and winter, was artfully exerted to make them discontented alike with their situation, their officers, and their prospects. He alarmed them with constant reports which he stated he had received from the interior, that the Indians from a distance were coming in the spring to attack them; and that unless they placed themselves under the protection of the North-West Company, and accepted his offers to take them to Canada, they would never be able to escape from the country or avoid the dangers surrounding them.

Prior to the departure of Cameron and McDonell from Fort William for Red River, they had adopted the expedient of providing themselves with British military uniforms. A military coat with a pair of epaulets, the cast-off uniform of a major, which had previously adorned the person of a factor named McLeod, now added to Cameron's dignity. He pretended to bear the King's commission, as did also his

companion; and these two worthies occasionally rode around the country in uniform, attended by a numerous suite of clerks and half-breeds, and other servants of the North-West company on horseback. Such imposture and assumed airs of authority would have evoked merely contempt or laughter, but under the circumstances had great weight with the ignorant settlers, who could not but help believing that Cameron and his followers were sanctioned by Government in their position and behaviour. The North-West agents now proceeded to put their plans into execution. The immigrants were alternately bribed, cajoled and threatened into abandoning their settlement on the Red River. To each Cameron engaged to give a free passage to Canada (generally to Montreal), a twelvemonth's supply of provisions *gratis* for themselves and families, while various sums, varying from £15 to £100, were paid or promised to deserters. A pretext being found, Spencer, the sheriff of the colony and a really valuable officer, was taken prisoner under a warrant from a North-West partner, and after a protracted detention sent overland to Montreal.

The North-West company causes discontent among the settlers.

During the interval between the autumn of 1814 and the spring of 1815, a number of the settlers were seduced and instigated to disloyalty against their benefactors and the Company. A large band of the Bois-Brulés were, during this period, maintained and paraded in arms under Cameron, who, now that the preparatory measures had reached this stage, believed the time ripe for more decisive measures.

Of the ruling spirit amongst the half-breed hordes, mention has already been made. Cuthbert Grant now appeared on the scene and with him some of his choicest dare-devil crew. The return of the settlers to the colony had filled the minds of the Bois-Brulés with rage. The contempt of the wild hunters of the plains for the peaceful tillers of the soil was great. They scorned them for their manual labour; they reproachfully termed them "the workers in gardens," and the phrase, "pork-eaters," formerly applied to the voyageurs east of Fort William, was now used derisively to the Scotch

settlers. All now looked forward to a grand gathering in the spring at "The Forks," to administer a final blow to the infant colony.

The disaffected settlers were therefore, during the temporary absence of a number of those who still continued faithful to their contracts and their duty, incited to rob and pillage a fort belonging to the settlement, and of the cannon set out by the British Government for its defence. Armed sentinels were placed at different doors to prevent opposition, while a part of the Bois-Brulés and servants of the Nor'-Westers, under the command of Cameron, were stationed in arms within the distance of a few hundred feet for the purpose of giving support to the plunderers in case their force should be insufficient. Nine pieces of artillery were thus taken from the settlement and delivered to the North-West party in waiting, who received them with shouts of triumph and conveyed them to their headquarters, Fort Gibraltar. To celebrate this exploit Cameron gave a ball and entertainment to the parties engaged, on the following evening.

A camp was now established at a place called Frog Plain, about four miles below the settlement, by the servants and partisans of the North-Westers, under the command of McDonell. In June, 1815, after the colony had been thereby deprived of the means of defence, and was in great measure surrounded by its enemies, the whole force of Cameron's post, consisting of half-breeds, servants and North-West clerks, sallied forth to make a combined attack on the settlement. A sharp fire of musketry was kept up for some time on the Governor's house and adjacent buildings. In this attack only four persons belonging to the settlement were wounded, but one died soon after. Several days passed, the men encamped at Frog Plain received orders to march to the settlement, where they erected a battery against the building called the Government House, on which they planted a portion of the cannon previously taken. After a series of attacks and skirmishes, Governor McDonnell was obliged to surrender himself as a prisoner, and under a warrant from a partner in the North-West com-

Attack on the settlement.

pany, sent to Montreal, charged with an undue arrogance of authority to the detriment of the fur-trade.

But the North-Westers were not yet satisfied. The principal person of the settlement (and one who also held the appointment, from the Hudson's Bay Company, of Governor of the district) was, it is true, in custody; but having got possession of him, peremptory orders were issued to Cameron directing the remaining settlers to leave the Red River. The most wanton acts of aggression followed on the part of Alexander McDonell, who, after Cameron's departure with his prisoner, succeeded to the command at the Forks. The colonists were frequently fired on; the farm-house was broken open and pillaged; a number of farm labourers were arrested; horses were stolen and cattle driven away. On the 22nd of June, another attack with fire-arms was made upon the Governor's house, but the fire was not returned by the dispirited settlers, who now resolved to migrate.

An episode occurring on the very eve of their departure showed clearly upon whose side the Indians of the interior were disposed to range themselves. Two Saulteaux chiefs, with about forty warriors of that nation, arrived at the settlement. Learning the condition of affairs they went over to the North-Westers' fort, and endeavoured to prevail upon McDonell to cease his persecution and allow the colonists to remain. Naturally, their request was refused, although the Indian numbers prevented the North-West official from laughing in their faces. To McLeod, the Hudson's Bay factor at Fort Douglas, the Indians expressed their regret; but considering the armament at the disposal of their foes, could offer them merely the protection of an escort down the river to Lake Winnipeg. The offer was thankfully accepted, and under their Indian escort, the officers and remaining settlers, amounting to about sixty, quitted the settlement, leaving McLeod and three clerks behind. Having in this manner quitted their homes, they proceeded in canoes to the mouth of the Red River, crossed Lake Winnipeg and took up a new

Forced departure of the colonists.

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THE FUR LOFT AT A HUDSON'S BAY POST.

abode at a trading-post on Jack River belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company.

The day following their departure, a party of North-West company clerks, servants and half-breeds gathered at the spot, and setting fire to the houses, the mill and the other buildings, burned them to the ground.

Great joy filled the breasts of the North-Westers assembled at Fort William when these brave tidings were conveyed to their ear. These tidings were accompanied by convincing proofs of the great victory gained over the enemy, in the persons of one hundred and thirty-four settlers, including men, women and children. They arrived about the end of July and found many of the partners gathered to receive them. The conduct of Cameron and McDonell met with the most enthusiastic approval. They were again appointed to command at the same stations in the interior, which they had charge of the previous season, with a view to oppose any further attempt to restore the scattered colony on Red River.

While, however, these marks of approbation were lavished upon the heroes of this work of destruction, the subordinate agents were by no means so liberally rewarded as they had reason to expect. They even complained of being defrauded of their promised hire. Many of the deserters from the colony, however, and those of the settlers whose treachery had proved most useful to the Montreal Company, were well rewarded for their services. One of the most interesting features of this business well deserves to be rescued from oblivion. It is the account-book captured in the following year by Lord Selkirk, together with other papers and effects of the North-West Company at Fort William, and despatched for safe-keeping to Hudson's Bay House, in London. It shows that credits were given to forty-eight of these persons for various articles which they had plundered from the settlement and delivered to Cameron at Fort Gibraltar. These consisted principally of implements of husbandry, working tools, horses, muskets,

Treachery rewarded.

guns, pistols, etc., etc. Thus in one of the pages appears a credit "for five new guns, £10; for a new common pistol, 15s.; one old gun, 15s.," etc., etc. At the bottom of these accounts were generally added the amounts they were to receive, and did receive, as rewards for their services against the settlement. Several thus obtained larger sums than, in all probability, they had ever been possessed of at any one period in the course of their lives. To many of their accounts were also subjoined, in the handwriting of Cameron and McDonell, brief abstracts of the services which these deserters had, respectively, performed in promoting the destruction of the settlement.

As an illustration of this, honourable mention is made of one of them (in the handwriting of Cameron) in this style: "This man joined our people in February, was a great partisan and very useful to us ever since, and deserves something from the North-West company, say five or six pounds." Of another, "This man was also a great partisan of ours, and made himself very useful to us; he lost his three years' earnings with the Hudson's Bay Company for joining us, and he deserves, at least, about £20." Of another (inscribed by Alexander McDonell): "He was very desperate in our cause this spring and deserves three or four pounds." There are other entries, as follows: "An active, smart fellow. Left the Hudson's Bay Company in April last—a true partisan, steady and brave. Took a most active part in the campaign this spring, and deserves from £15 to £20. He has lost about £20 by leaving the Hudson's Bay Company a month before the expiration of his contract."

„ This man left the Hudson's Bay Company in the month of April, owing to which he lost three years' wages. His behaviour towards us has been that of a true partisan—a steady, brave and resolute man; and was something of a leading character among his countrymen, and deserves at least about £20."

But the truest of all these "partisans" appears to have been one George Campbell. This hitherto obscure personage was accordingly conspicuously honoured, as well as rewarded,

by the North-West company. He was seated at table in their common hall at Fort William, next to the partners, and above the clerks of the company. Enviable distinction! But it was but as the shadow of a more tangible and, doubtless, to its recipient, a more valued reward. By the direction of the partnership he received a recompense of £100, paid to him by one of the company's clerks. In the account-book above mentioned appears Cameron's testimony to the merits of this hero. "This (George Campbell) is a very decent man, and a great partisan, who often exposed his life for the North-West company. He has been of very essential service in the transactions of Red River, and deserves at least £100, Halifax; and every other service that can be rendered him by the North-West company. Rather than that his merit and services should go unrewarded, I would give him £100 myself, although I have already been a good deal out of pocket by my campaign to Red River."

Leaves from the account book.

One would fain linger in the common-hall, at Fort William, the barbaric splendour and even opulence of whose creature comforts have been painted for us by another and more gifted hand.

How deep the potations, how turbulent the revelry when the flushed cohorts from Red River returned and took their places at the board, conscious of a victory gained over their hated rivals, the Merchants-Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay, and those miserable colonists despatched by their Governor to begin the peopling of the West! Moreover, tidings now came to swell their joy that the war between Great Britain and America was ended, and so further relieved their dread of disaster. But decisive as their triumph seemed, it was short-lived. Even in the midst of this vulgar wassail the despised settlers had returned, and affairs at Red River were shaping for a tragedy.

CHAPTER XXXI.

1816–1817.

A New Brigade of Immigrants—Robert Semple —Cuthbert Grant's Letter — The De Meuron Regiment — Assembling of the Bois-Brulés — Tragedy at Seven Oaks—Selkirk at Fort William—McGillivray Arrested—Arrest of the Northmen—Selkirk proceeds to Red River.

A new brigade of emigrants had sailed from Stromness. Gloomy and portentous was the prospect which greeted them on their arrival. They beheld their comrades and fellow-countrymen of the previous brigade, who had returned from their exile at Jack River, still gazing in wretchedness upon the embers of their late dwellings, seeking to rescue what produce remained in the earth for their winter's subsistence.

The ship which had brought out these immigrants had also carried an able officer of the Company, Robert Semple, a man of parts and culture, who had been appointed to the chief control of all the factories in Rupert's Land.

The hostile feuds and lawless proceedings of the fur-trading "partisans" had convulsed the whole Indian country throughout its boundaries. The arrival of more immigrants only served to add fresh fuel to the flame. It cannot be denied that between the two rival companies the North-Westers possessed one dangerous advantage, viz., the authority and influence they had over the half-breeds, their own servants, and over many of the more dissolute Indians. "They had so trained and influenced these," says, with great truth, one sober trader writing of those times, "both in the school of mischief, rapine and bloodshed, that no outrage which the unscrupulous ministers of a lawless despotism

Influence of the Nor'-Westers over the half-breeds.

could inflict was too extravagant to dread.* Posts were pillaged, robberies committed, and valuable lives sacrificed without remorse."

Instead of settling down quietly and cultivating the soil on their arrival, all the immigrants were quickly dispersed in search of a precarious subsistence at Pembina and elsewhere, as had been the case with the first unhappy brigade. They separated, to weather the storms of winter as best they might, hunting and fishing amongst the savages, and enduring every species of privation and suffering which fate could inflict upon them. As soon, however, as the snows of winter were melted, all re-assembled at the colony, and fell to with a will to the task of tilling the ground, and sowing what, alas, the fowls of the air were to reap.

For a moment let us turn to Lord Selkirk. On the arrival of this nobleman at New York on his way to Canada to support in person the exertions of his colonists, he received intelligence of their dispersion, and the capture of his lieutenant and agent. He immediately proceeded to Montreal where

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* There is preserved a letter from the leader of the Bois-Brulés, written to one of the partners. It bears date of 13th of March, 1816, and runs as follows :—

My Dear Sir: I received your generous and kind letter of last fall by the last canoe. I should certainly be an ungrateful being should I not return you my sincerest thanks. Although a very bad hand at writing letters I trust to your generosity. I am yet safe and sound, thank God ! For I believe it is more than Colin Robertson, or any of his suit dare to offer the least insult to any of the Bois-Brulés, although Robertson made use of some expressions which I hope he shall swallow in the spring ; he shall see that it is neither fifteen, thirty nor fifty of your best horsemen can make the Bois-Brulés bow to him. Our people of Fort des Prairies and English River are all to be here in the spring. It is hoped we shall come off with flying colours, and never to see any of them again in the colonizing way in Red River ; in fact the traders shall pack off with themselves, also, for having disobeyed our orders last spring, according to our arrangements. We are all to remain at the Forks to pass the summer, for fear they should play us the same trick as last summer, of coming back ; but they shall receive a warm reception. I am loath to enter into any particulars, as I am well assured that you will receive more satisfactory information (than I have had) from your other correspondents ; therefore I shall not pretend to give you any, at the same time begging you will excuse my short letter, I shall conclude, wishing you health and happiness.

I shall ever remain,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. D. CAMERON, ESQ. CUTHBERT GRANT.

he was apprised of the danger with which the new arrivals were threatened as well as the distress which had overtaken those settlers who had been brought into Canada. The North-West Company had no further use for their services, the expense of bringing them down having already proved sufficiently burdensome. The alluring promises made on the banks of the Red River, of lands, high wages, practical encouragement, were forgotten on the shores of the St. Lawrence. Selkirk was determined upon a rigid enquiry; and steps were taken by his agents in Upper and Lower Canada to that end. While he was thus engaged, information arrived of the re-establishment of the colony, both brigades of immigrants having made a junction at Red River, on the departure of Cameron and McDonell. Lord Selkirk, having despatched a messenger* into the interior to advise the settlers of his speedy arrival amongst them, now renewed his endeavour to obtain from the Governor of Canada, Sir Gordon Drummond, some small military protection for the settlers. But his application was refused. One, if not the principal, of the reasons being that Drummond had no desire to lower his popularity by exerting his influence against the partners of the North-West Company. The attempt proving fruitless, a new resource offered itself, and this Selkirk was not loath to seize.

Lord Selkirk arrives in Canada.

As a result of the termination of hostilities with America, the hired European regiments of De Meuron, Watteville and the Glengarry Fencibles in Canada were reduced. The privates, as well as their officers, were entitled on their discharge to grants of lands in Canada, and in the event of their accepting them, the members of the two first-mentioned regiments

* This messenger, Lagimoniere by name, was waylaid and robbed by the North-Westers. He had previously made a hazardous winter journey of upwards of 2,000 miles for the purpose of bringing to Montreal intelligence of the re-establishment of the Red River Colony. He was now attacked near Fond du Lac by some native hunters employed by the North-West Company, who beat him in a shocking manner, besides plundering him of his despatches, his canoe and all his effects. The order to intercept him was issued on the 2nd of June by Norman McLeod from Fort William; and the Indians who performed the service were credited in the books of the partnership with the sum of $100. Several of Lord Selkirk's letters were afterwards discovered at Fort William.

were not to be sent back to Europe. A proposition was put to them and agreed to with alacrity.

The regiments to which these men belonged were part of the body of German mercenaries raised during the Napoleonic wars. Col. De Meuron, one of the most illustrious officers, bequeathed his name to the whole body. Though Germans for the most part, Swiss and Piedmontese were also numbered amongst them. While the great Corsican was languishing at Elba, the De Meurons were equally inactive at Malta, but in the war which had broken out between England and the American States there was plenty of work for their swords. They were shipped to Canada, and in 1816, hostilities having ceased, they were again out of employment.

Regiment of De Meuron.

Lord Selkirk perceived in them an instrument ready to his hand. He sent for their officers, four in number, Captains d'Orsonnens and Matthey, and Lieutenants Fauché and Graffenreith, and informed them he had work in hand. They listened and agreed to his terms on behalf of their men. They hastened in boats up the St. Lawrence, and at Kingston encountered twenty other foreign soldiers belonging to the De Watteville regiment, and also victims of peace. These were engaged on the same terms.

Eighty soldiers and four officers of De Meuron's regiment, twenty of Watteville's, and several of the Glengarry Fencibles, with one of their officers, instead of remaining in Canada, preferred going to the Red River settlement on the terms proposed by Lord Selkirk. They were to receive pay at a certain rate per month for navigating the canoes up to Red River, were to have lands assigned to them at the settlement, and if they did not elect to remain were to be conveyed at his lordship's expense to Europe by way of Hudson's Bay. Whatever we may now think of the motive prompting the employment of these men, it must be conceded that it was effected with propriety and ingenuous formality. The men being discharged could no longer be held soldiers. They retained their clothing, as was usual in such cases, and Lord Selkirk furnished them with arms, as he had done to his other

settlers. Had there existed a disposition to criticise this latter measure, ample justification was to be found in the instructions of the Board of Ordnance, in 1813, to issue some field pieces and a considerable number of muskets and ammunition for the use of the Red River colony.

With this body of men Selkirk proceeded into the interior.

While he was on the march, the colony on Red River was apprehending alarming consequences. Cameron and McDonell, the two North-West partners, had arrived the previous autumn and been astonished at the temerity of the settlers at returning to the forbidden spot, and measures had at once been taken to molest and discourage them. Thereupon the Hudson's Bay factor, Colin Robertson, who, in Governor McDonnell's absence, had placed himself at their head, planned an attack upon Fort Gibraltar, which he seized by surprise in the month of October. He thus recovered two of the field pieces and thirty stand of arms, which had been abstracted from the settlement in the previous year. In this capture no blood was shed, and although Cameron was taken prisoner he was released upon a promise to behave peaceably in future and was even reinstated in possession of his fort. But this posture of affairs was not long to endure.

Fort Gibraltar captured.

At the beginning of March, Governor Semple went west to inspect the forts on the Assiniboine, Lake Manitoba, and Swan Lake, leaving Robertson in command. On the 16th, suspecting a plot on the part of Cameron and his North-Westers, Robertson intercepted some letters, which transformed suspicion into conviction. He therefore attacked the North-West post, took Cameron prisoner, and removed all the arms, trading goods, furs, books and papers, to Fort Douglas.* He furthermore informed his enemy that being situated at the

* Semple is said, on the authority of an eye-witness, Donald Murray, yet living in 1891 (when a monument was erected to commemorate the Red River tragedy), to have disapproved of Robertson's management during his absence. This veteran was fond of relating that when Robertson started for York Factory in a boat, taking Duncan Cameron a prisoner, he insultingly hoisted a pemmican sack instead of the British flag.

confluence of the two rivers, the Red and the Assiniboine, Fort Gibraltar was the key to the position, and could be in no other hands but those of the lords of the soil. Following up this move, Robertson attacked the North-West post on the Pembina River, captured Bostonnais Pangman, who was in charge, with two clerks and six voyageurs, who were afterwards incarcerated in Fort Douglas. Pursuing his advantage an attempt was made to carry Fort Qu'Appelle. But McDonell, who was in command there, displayed considerable force, and caused the Hudson's Bay people to retire.

About this period five flat-bottomed boats belonging to the Company, laden with pemmican and from thirty to forty packs of furs, under charge of James Sutherland, were *en route* to Fort Douglas. McDonell was advised of the circumstance and seized the whole, while retaining two of the factors, Bird and Pambrun, as prisoners. A canoe was given Sutherland and the others, together with a scanty supply of pemmican, and they were allowed to continue their journey to the fort. On receiving intelligence of this proceeding, as well as of the plots being hatched by the half-breeds and their allies in the West, Robertson concluded that Cameron would be best out of the way; the prisoner was accordingly sent off under guard to York Factory, from whence he reached England seventeen months later. Here he was released without a trial, and soon afterwards returned to Canada, where he spent the remainder of his years.

The enemy were no sooner out of Fort Gibraltar than Robertson had the walls pulled down. All the useful material was rafted down the river to Fort Douglas, where it was employed in new erections within that post.

McDonell now exerted himself to the utmost to assemble the half-breeds from every quarter, for the purpose of a final extermination of the colony at Red River. Many of these were collected from a very distant part of the country; some from Cumberland House and also from the Upper Saskatchewan, at least seven hundred miles from the settlement. Reports had reached the colonists, of whom there were, all

Plan to exterminate the Red River Settlement.

told, about two hundred, that the Bois-Brulés were assembling in all parts of the north for the purpose of driving them away. Each day increased the prevalence of these rumours. The hunters, and the free Canadians who had supplied them with provisions, were terrified at the prospect of the punishment they might receive at the hands of the violent North-Westers.

About the close of May the North-Wester, Alexander McDonell, embarked in his boats with the furs and bags of provisions which he had seized, as above related, from the Hudson's Bay people. He was attended by a body of the half-breeds on horseback, who followed him along the banks of the river.

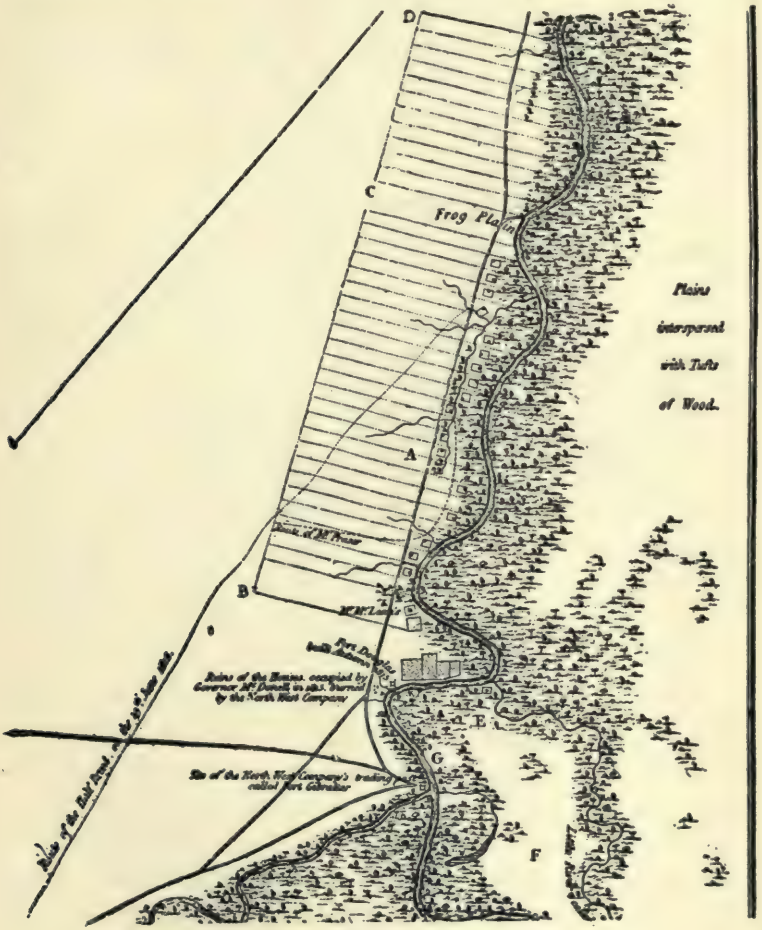
When the party arrived near the chief Hudson's Bay Company's post, Brandon House, Cuthbert Grant was sent ahead with twenty-five men, who seized the post and pillaged it, not only of all the English goods, together with the furs and provisions belonging to the Company, but also of the private property of their servants, which was distributed amongst the servants and half-breeds. The latter were now eager for the accomplishment of their great desire. Accordingly, on the 18th of June, Cuthbert Grant, Lacerte, Frazer, Hoole and McKay were sent off from Portage la Prairie, with about seventy men, to attack the colony at Red River. McDonell himself, foreseeing the issue, prudently remained behind.*

The tidings he anticipated would arrive were not long delayed. On the 20th of June a messenger, covered with sweat, returned from Cuthbert Grant, to report that his party had killed Governor Semple, with five of his officers and sixteen of his people. At this welcome news of the consummation of their fondest hopes, McDonell and the other officers shouted with joy. No time was lost in spreading the story.

* The route taken by the Bois-Brulés was along the edge of the swamps, about two miles out on the prairie from Fort Douglas, and from that point gradually drawing nearer to the main highway, which is now the northern continuation of Winnipeg's Main street, until it effected a junction at a spot known as Seven Oaks. The name was derived from the circumstance of seven good sized oak trees growing there, about one hundred yards south of a small rivulet, now known as Inkster's Creek.

The unhappy Pambrun, from his confinement, could distinctly hear the cries of the French and half-breeds, which they caught up again and again in a paroxysm of triumph.

"Sacré nom de Dieu! Bonne Nouvelles! Vingt-deux Anglaise de tués!"



SCENE OF THE RED RIVER TRAGEDY.

The story of this tragedy of the plains, to which for a time was cynically applied the term, "battle," has been often and variously narrated; but the facts seem clear enough. Semple,

the Governor, was on the point of returning to York Factory on the concerns of the Company, when the rumours of immediate hostility, which have been described, checked his departure. Measures of precaution were adopted and a watch regularly kept to guard against surprise. On the 17th of June, two Cree Indians who had escaped from the party of North-Westers under McDonell, came to the Governor at Fort Douglas, adjoining the settlement, with the intelligence that he would certainly be attacked in two days by the Bois-Brulés, under Cuthbert Grant, who were determined to take the fort, and that if any resistance were made, neither man, woman or child would escape.

The affair at Seven Oaks.

Peguis, chief of the Swampy Indians, who came periodically to the district about the mouth of the Red River, also waited on Governor Semple for the purpose of offering the services of his tribe, about seventy in number, to assist in the colonists protection.

A conflict seemed inevitable. On the afternoon of the 19th a man in the watch-house called out that the half-breeds were coming. Governor Semple and his officers surveyed the neighbouring plains through their telescopes and made out the approach of some men on horseback. These were not, however, headed in the direction of the fort, but of the settlement.

Semple's words were: "We must go out and meet these people; let twenty men follow me." They proceeded by the frequented path leading to the settlement. As they went along they met many of the colonists, who were running towards them, crying: "The half-breeds! The half-breeds!" An advance was made of about one mile, when some persons on horseback were discerned in ambush, close at hand, and the Governor, somewhat uneasy at the signs of their numbers, had just decided to send for a field-piece, when a fearful clamour pierced the air, and he saw it was too late. The half-breeds galloped forward, their faces painted in the most hideous man-



THE SHOOTING OF GOVERNOR SEMPLE.

(See page 413.)

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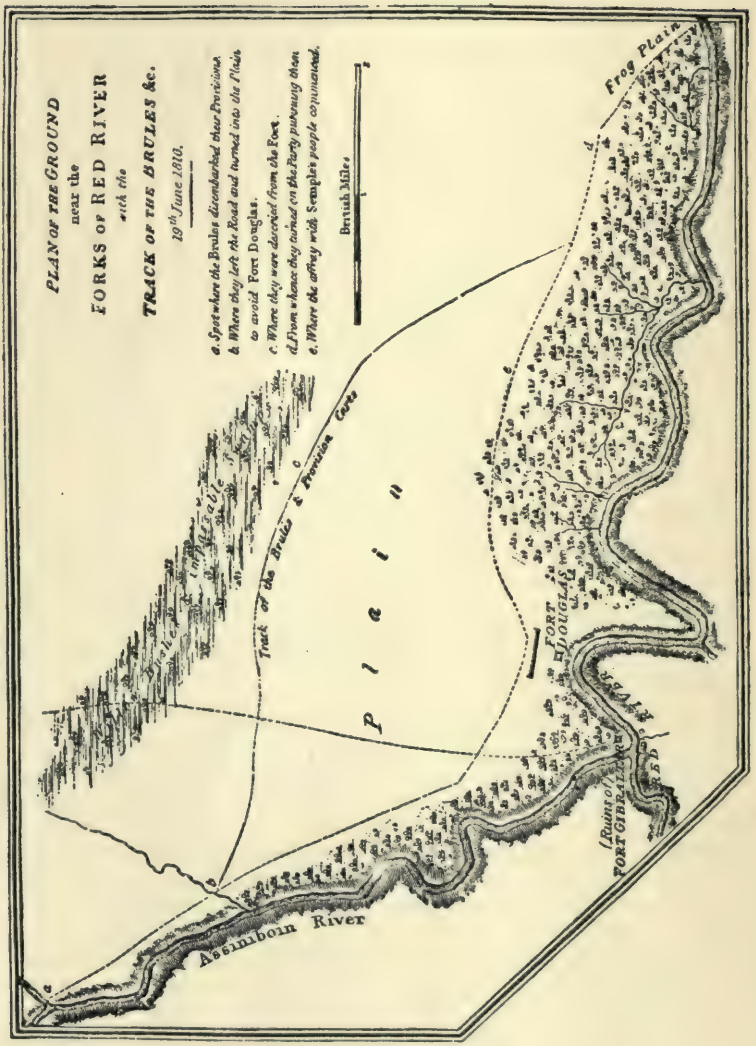
ner, and all dressed in the Indian fashion* and surrounded the Hudson's Bay people in the form of a half-moon. As they advanced the latter party retreated, and a North-West employee named Boucher rode up very close to Governor Semple and asked what he wanted there? To this enquiry, which was delivered in a very authoritative and insolent tone, Semple replied by demanding of Boucher what he and his party wanted? Boucher said: "We want our fort," and the Governor's answer was: "Well, go to your fort." In a loud tone came the other's rejoinder: "You damned rascal, you have destroyed our fort." Semple, though a man of extremely mild manners and cultivated mind, flushed with indignation at such an address, and incautiously laid hand upon the bridle of Boucher's horse, according to some; of his gun, according to others. A few high words passed. Two shots rang out in quick succession, by the first of which Holt fell, and by the second Semple was wounded.† In a few minutes the field was covered with bleeding forms; almost all Semple's men were either killed or wounded. Save in a single instance no quarter was given; the injured were summarily despatched, and on the bodies of the dead were practised all the revolting horrors which characterize the inhuman heart of the savage.‡

Killing of Governor Semple.

* Their being painted and disguised, forms a very material fact, because it shows a premeditation to commit hostilities. It was not the custom of the Indians or Bois-Brulés to paint themselves, except on warlike occasions. Seeing this party of horsemen were proceeding towards the settlement, Semple directed about twenty men to follow him in the direction they had taken to ascertain what was their object. These took arms with them, but no ammunition. That Semple and his party went out with no hostile intention is evident from there being but twenty who went, whereas a much greater number who could have gone and were desirous of going, were left behind.

†After the tragedy many of the settlers are said to have been of the opinion that the first shot was fired by Lieut. Holt, whose gun went off by accident, thus precipitating the conflict.

‡ While the affair was sufficiently horrible, there was yet room for exaggeration in the tales of the survivors. "On my arrival at the fort," declared Pritchard, "what a scene of distress presented itself! The widows, children and relations of the slain, in the horrors of despair, were lamenting the dead and trembling for the safety of the survivors." It is to be noted that only one actual settler was killed, and I cannot discover that the others had any white women-folk amongst them.



VICINITY OF FORT DOUGLAS.

In all twenty-one persons were killed, the remaining eight escaping to the woods. Besides Governor Semple, Lieutenant Holt, Captain Rogers, Dr. James White and Dr. Wilkinson, the Governor's private secretary were amongst the dead.

Immediately every human being at Fort Douglas was plunged into confusion and dismay. The survivors, hastily returning, told their fell tale, and men, women and children crowded together seeking protection within its walls. Bourke, and a few of his companions, had succeeded in regaining the fort with the cannon he had taken out. All waited for the expected attack of the North-Westers. An anxious night ensued, but no attack, and it was afterwards learnt that the Bois-Brulés had a wholesome dread of the cannon in the hands of the settlers.

Pritchard, who had been taken prisoner to the camp ground of the main body of the half-breeds, now begged Cuthbert Grant, the leader, to be allowed to go to Fort Douglas. After securing his consent, he met with a refusal on the part of the others, until he gave a promise to bear a message of eviction to the colonists and return. Grant accompanied the prisoner on parole as far as Seven Oaks, where the ground was still strewn with the corpses of the slain.

On reaching Fort Douglas, Pritchard informed the unhappy settlers that they must depart, which if they did immediately, a safe escort would be provided them, and they would be permitted to take all their personal effects. They were told that two other groups of North-Westers were daily expected to arrive in the locality, one hailing from the Saskatchewan, and the other party from Lake Superior. It would, therefore, be necessary to send some of the Bois-Brulés with them, to explain the situation.

The Nor'-Westers demand evacuation.

At first the colonists refused to listen to these terms. Sheriff McDonnell, who was now in charge of the settlement, resolved to hold the fort as long as the men were disposed to guard it. But they were not long of this courageous temper. After fully considering the situation, the settlers

concluded to depart, and after several conferences between the sheriff and Cuthbert Grant, a capitulation was arranged.

An inventory of all the property was taken, and the whole delivered up to the half-breed leader, for the use of the North-West company, each sheet of the inventory being signed as follows :—

" Received on account of the North-West Company by me, Cuthbert Grant, Clerk for the N.-West Co."

In two days the colonists, in all nearly two hundred, were ready to embark for Hudson's Bay. Albeit they had not been long on the voyage down the river before they were met by Norman McLeod, one of the leading partners of the North-West company, accompanied by a large party in canoes. At sight of the settlers the North-Westers set up an Indian war-whoop, and when they drew sufficiently near, McLeod, who posed as a magistrate, is said to have enquired, " Whether that rascal and scoundrel Robertson was in the boats." The colloquy was followed by a seizure of the accounts and papers of the settlers, including some of Governor Semple's letters. Of these they kept what they deemed proper, the rest being returned. McLeod took his magistracy very seriously, and seems to have regarded the whole party as his prisoners. He expressed neither horror nor regret at the murder of Semple and his companions, but ordered Sheriff McDonnell, Pritchard, Bourke, Corcoran, Heden and McKay to be arrested and put under a strong guard. McDonnell was liberated on bail, but the others were treated for nearly a week with the greatest indignity. Nevertheless, the North-Westers felt themselves in a sorry plight, which, they flattered themselves, a brazen behaviour might alleviate.

Arrest of colonists.

The five men thus made prisoners were, after various delays and after two of them had been put in irons, conveyed to Fort William. They had not long been inmates of quarters at this great post, when McLeod and his party arrived there. With him came a number of the Bois-Brulés, Semple's murderers, bearing a portion of the plunder which had been

reserved for the North-West company. Their arrival was the signal for rejoicing. The air was filled with impromptu songs and ballads commemorative of the happy event, which swept away the colony on the Red River. The "complete downfall" desired by the North-West partner seemed to have been consummated.

At that time Fort William was the great emporium of the North-West company. An extensive assortment of merchandise was brought thither every year from Montreal by large canoes or the Company's vessels on the lakes, these returning with the furs to Canada and from thence shipped to England.

It is difficult to imagine, as one visits the spot to-day, that it was once the abode of industry, of gaiety, of opulence and even of splendour. It boasted a fashionable season, which continued from May to late in August, and during this period the fur aristocracy, the *bourgeoisie* and the *canaille*, met and mingled in a picturesque carnival of mirth, feasting and exultation.

It was the meeting-place between the Montreal partners and voyageurs, and those who coursed the boundless expanse of the distant west. To the wintering clerks and partners, after their hardships and fasts in the interior, Fort William seemed a foretaste of Paradise, and a hundred journals of a hundred traders tell again the tale of a dream of distant Fort William, which, in the midst of cold, hunger and desolation, cheered the wanderer's heart and lightened his burdens. For the voyageurs it was all in all. To reach Fort William, enjoy the carnival, and betwixt drink and riotous living dissipate the hard-earned wages of years was to them often the happiness of earth and heaven combined.

It was in the great dining-hall that there centred the chief glory of Fort William. Of noble proportions was it, and capable of entertaining two hundred persons, and here fully two hundred sat when the news from Red River reached them. Let us attempt to describe the scene. There on a glittering pedestal looked down on the joyous company a marble bust of Simon McTavish; while ever and anon the eye of some

struggling clerk or ambitious partner would be attracted by a row of paintings, depicting to the life the magnates of the North, and rest with ecstasy upon those gleaming eyes and rubicund cheeks, cheerful prophesies of his own roseate future. Not all were portraits of opulent Northmen—other heroes lent the glory of their visages to this spacious hall—the King in his majesty, the Prince Regent, and Admiral the Lord Nelson. A gigantic painting of the memorable battle of the Nile also adorned the walls. At the upper end hung a huge map of the Indian country, drawn by David Thompson, he who had written at the crisis of his career, "To-day I left the services of the Hudson's Bay Company to join the North-West, and may God help me." On this extraordinary production were inscribed in characters bold enough to be seen by the humblest *engagé* at the farthest end of the great hall, the whole number of the Company's trading posts from Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean, from Sault Ste. Marie to Athabasca and the Great Slave Lake. Many a time and oft while the feast was at its height and the wine bottles of the partners were being broached and the rum puncheons tapped, was a glance cast at some spot on that map which marked months of suffering, the death place of a comrade, the love of an Indian maiden, a thrilling adventure, a cruel massacre, painful solitude, great rejoicing or a bitter disappointment.

Fort William described.

But if the scene within was noisy and animated, that without beggared description. Hundreds of voyageurs, soldiers, Indians, and half-breeds were encamped together in the open, holding high revel. They hailed from all over the globe, England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland, America, the African Gold Coast, the Sandwich Islands, Bengal, Canada, with Creoles, various tribes of Indians, and a mixed progeny of Bois-Brulés or half-breeds! "Here," cries one trader, "were congregated on the shores of the inland sea, within the walls of Fort William, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Sun-worshippers, men from all parts of the world whose creeds were 'wide as poles asunder,' united in one common

object, and bowing down before the same idol." Women, soldiers, voyageurs, and Indians, in ever moving medley, danced, sang, drank, and gamboled about the fort on the night when the news came of the tragedy of the Red River.

Meanwhile it will be remembered that the Earl of Selkirk was on his way, with his party of about eighty soldiers, to the scene of this rude rejoicing. When Sault Ste. Marie was reached, the first intelligence of the massacre and destruction of the colony was received, together with the news that some of the settlers and a large part of the property had been transported to Fort William.

Filled with indignation, and determined to demand an explanation of the bloody deed, the Earl pressed on with all haste to the rendezvous of the North-West company, who, all unconscious of his approach, had made no plan either to defend themselves or to arrest his progress.

Selkirk arrives at Fort William.

Upon his arrival in the vicinity many favourable to the Company came out to meet him and relate the present state of affairs. As a magistrate for the country, he secured a number of affidavits, disclosing such circumstances of conspiracy and participation on the part of the North-Westers as determined him, as it was his duty, to issue warrants for their arrest. These were accordingly issued, first for the apprehension of William McGillivray, the principal partner, and next for that of all the other partners.

A great many of the North-West partners were at this time assembled at Fort William, and amongst them was William McGillivray, their principal agent in Canada. Lord Selkirk immediately despatched a message to that gentleman, desiring to know by what authority and for what reason Pritchard, Pambrun, Nolin and others from Red River were detained as prisoners in their hands. McGillivray's response was to grant permission to most of these prisoners to join Selkirk, to whom he denied that they were detained, except as witnesses. The parties thus freed came over, asserting that they had all suffered for some time a rigorous confinement. The intelligence

they conveyed was of such a nature as to induce the Earl to issue warrants for the arrest of most of the North-West partners then at Fort William.

The first to be arrested was McGillivray, who submitted with the best possible grace to the warrant. Two other partners who came over with him, to offer themselves on bail (which was refused), were also taken in custody. Instructions were now given to constables to again set out in the boats, accompanied by some of the soldiers, to apprehend the other delinquents. On their landing, four or five of the Northmen were standing close to the gate of the fort, surrounded by a considerable body of French-Canadians, Indians and half-breeds in the North-West company's employment. The warrants were in the usual form served upon two of the partners ; but when the constable was proceeding to arrest a third, he declared that there should be no further submission to any warrant until McGillivray was liberated. At the same instant an attempt was made to shut the gate and prevent the constables from entering. The fort people had succeeded in shutting one half of the gate, and had almost closed the other by force, when the chief constable called out for help from the soldiers. These to the number of about thirty forthwith rushed to the spot, and forced their way into the stronghold of the Northmen.

Arrest of the North-West partners.

The notes of a bugle now rang out across the river. The Earl understood the signal, and a fresh force of about thirty other veterans hurried quickly over the stream to join their comrades. Awed by the apparition of so many arms and uniforms, the North-Westers abandoned further resistance, and thus bloodshed was happily averted. The partner who had refused obedience to the warrant was seized and taken forcibly to the boats, the others submitting peaceably to arrest.

At the time this episode was in progress, there were about two hundred French-Canadians and half-breeds, and sixty or seventy Iroquois Indians in and about the fort.

A warrant having been issued to search for and secure the

North-West papers, seals were in due course put upon these and guards placed for their security. The arrested men were transported to the Earl's camp ; but upon their pledging their word of honour that no further attempt should be made to obstruct the execution of the law, and that all hostile measures should be renounced, they were permitted that same night to return to their apartments at Fort William.

Notwithstanding this, it was discovered next morning that the seals had been broken in several places, and that many letters and papers had been burnt in the kitchen in the course of the night. More than this, a canoe loaded with arms and ammunition had been launched and several barrels of gunpowder had been secretly conveyed from the fort. These were afterwards traced to a place of concealment amongst some brushwood close at hand. About fifty or sixty stand of Indian guns, to all appearance freshly loaded and primed, were found hidden under some hay in a barn adjoining the fort.

Owing to these discoveries, and suspecting treachery on the part of the Canadians and Indians, the greater part of the latter were ordered to evacuate the premises and pitch their tents on the opposite side of the river. Having seen this carried out, and having secured all the canoes of the enemy, Selkirk and his party came over and pitched their tents in front of the fort and mounted guard. Soon after, the North-West prisoners were sent off under escort to York, and finally reached Montreal in a state of mind not difficult to conceive.

Fort William had been captured by Lord Selkirk. He himself, writing in 1817, observes, that "in the execution of his duty as a Magistrate," he had become possessed of "a fort which had served, the last of any in the British dominions, as an asylum for banditti and murderers, and the receptacle for their plunder. A fort which nothing less than the express and special license of his Majesty could authorize subjects to hold. A fort which had served as the capital and seat of Government to the traitorously assumed sovereignty of the North-West. A fort whose possession could have enabled the North-West company to have kept back all evidence of their crimes."

"Heretofore," exclaims the Earl, "those who in the execution of the laws obtained possession of such strongholds as served for the retreat of banditti or murderers, were considered to have rendered a national service, and were rewarded with public gratitude and thanks."

It can hardly be supposed that either the Canadians or the North-West partners were animated by any such sentiments.

"That canting rascal and hypocritical villain, Lord Selkirk, has got possession of our post at Fort William," was the phrase employed by one of the aggrieved partners. "Well, we will have him out of that fort," he pursued amiably, "as the Hudson's Bay knaves shall be cleared, bag and baggage, out of the North-West. And this in short order, mark my words."

Selkirk winters at Fort William.

But his lordship was by no means of so accommodating a temper, nor was there anything to accelerate his abandonment of the post. Finding it too late to continue his journey on to Red River, he despatched a party of his men in advance, and himself resolved to pass the winter as pleasantly and profitably as circumstances would permit at Fort William.

McGillivray and his companions, upon reaching Montreal, were greeted by an assembled host of their friends. Public opinion there was in their favour, whatever it might be in other quarters. On all sides one heard diatribes pronounced against Selkirk and the Hudson's Bay Company, and little sympathy for the victims of the massacre. The North-Westers were instantly admitted to bail, and warrants were sworn out for the Earl's arrest. A constable was sent to Fort William to execute them, but on his arrival found himself made prisoner, and his authority treated with contempt. In a few days he was released and ordered to return to those who had sent him on his unprofitable mission.

Lord Selkirk was by no means idle at Fort William. He sent out parties to capture other North-West posts, and in this way the forts of Fond du Lac, Michipicoten and Lac la Pluie fell into his hands. When the month of May arrived he was ready to take up his journey to the West.

CHAPTER XXXII.

1817–1821.

The English Government Intervenes—Selkirk at Red River—Makes a Treaty with the Indians—Hostilities at Peace River—Governor Williams makes Arrests—Franklin at York Factory—The Duke of Richmond Interferes—Trial of Semple's Murderers—Death of Selkirk—Amalgamation.

Tidings of the brutal massacre of the 19th of June, and the subsequent acts of robbery and bloodshed in the wilderness, reached London in due course, awakening the Imperial authorities to the necessity of at once terminating a strife which had now become chronic. In February, 1817, therefore, while Lord Selkirk was still at Fort William, the Governor-General of Canada received a despatch from the Home Government, which contained the following passage :—

You will also require, under similar penalties, a restitution of all forts, buildings and trading stations, with the property which they contain, which may have been seized, or taken possession of by either party, to the party who originally established or constructed the same, and who were in possession of them previous to the recent disputes between the two companies. You will also require the removal of any blockade or impediment by which any party may have attempted to prevent the free passage of traders, or other of his Majesty's subjects, or the natives of the country, with their merchandise, furs, provisions or other effects throughout the lakes, rivers, roads, and every other usual route or communication heretofore used for the purpose of the fur-trade in the interior of North America, and the full and free permission of all persons to pursue their usual and accustomed trade without hindrance or molestation. The mutual restoration of all property captured during these disputes, and the freedom of trade and intercourse with the Indians, until the trials now pending can be brought to a judicial decision, and the great question at issue, with respect to the rights of the companies, shall be definitely settled.

The Governor-General appointed Colonel Coltman and Major Fletcher, two military personages of high character, to act as commissioners, in order to carry out the Imperial Government's intentions. Coltman and Fletcher left Montreal in

the same month that Selkirk evacuated Fort William. No sooner had Lord Selkirk and his party left this great trading post than the Sheriff of Upper Canada arrived, and by virtue of a writ of restitution took possession and restored it to its original owners. The commissioners, confronted by this fact, continued their journey on to Red River, arriving at Fort Douglas while Lord Selkirk was still in that locality. They proceeded to execute their commission, and to endeavour to restore the region to law and order. The merchandise, provisions and furs were in the course of the summer apportioned to their respective proprietors; the channels of communication were opened, and in time the commissioners were enabled to return to Canada, flattering themselves with the hope that the orders of the Prince Regent would be everywhere obeyed. The commissioners made a most circumstantial report of their mission, of which both parties complained that neither had received justice, which (as Senator Masson truly observes) was a very good reason for supposing that the report was just and impartial.

Fort William restored to the Nor'-Westers.

Unhappily, this hope of theirs was not destined to be fulfilled. Fort Gibraltar had been destroyed, but the North-Westers at once set about erecting buildings for carrying on their trade. Selkirk meanwhile devoted himself to the affairs of his colony, making provision for the soldiers of the De Meuron and Watteville regiments according to the contract mutually entered into. He allotted each man a plot of land either in the vicinity of Fort Douglas, or on the other side of the river, close at hand; and the officers were stationed amongst them. This was done so that in case of any necessity arising, a signal from headquarters would enable the whole body to join their commanders in the fort at short notice. Everything was effected which, in his opinion, could conduce to the well-being of the colony. Selkirk now turned his attention to the Indians, whom he called together within the walls of the fort, and after bestowing amongst them presents, concluded the following treaty with them:—

This Indenture, made on the 18th day of July, in the fifty-seventh year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord, King George the Third, and in the year of our Lord, 1817, between the undersigned Chiefs and Warriors of the Chippeway or Saulteaux Nation, and of the Killistins or Cree Nation, on the one part, and the Right Honourable Thomas, Earl of Selkirk, on the other part. Witnesseth, that for and in consideration of the annual present or quit rent hereinafter mentioned, the said Chiefs have given, granted and confirmed, and do by these presents give, grant and confirm unto our Sovereign Lord, the King, all that tract of land adjacent to Red River and Assiniboine River, beginning at the mouth of the Red River, and extending along the same as far as the great Forks at the mouth of the Red Lake River, and along Assiniboine River as far as Musk-Rat River, otherwise called Riviere des Champignons, and extending to the distance of six miles from Fort Douglas on every side, and likewise from Fort Daer (Pembina), and also from the Great Forks, and in other parts extending in the breadth to the distance of two English statute miles back from the banks of the said rivers, on each side, together with all the appurtenances whatsoever of the said tract of land, to have and to hold forever the said tract of land and appurtenances, to the use of the said Earl of Selkirk, and of the settlers being established thereon, with the consent and permission of our Sovereign Lord, the King, or of the said Earl of Selkirk. Provided always, that these presents are under the express condition that the Earl, his heirs and successors, or their agents, shall annually pay to the Chiefs and Warriors of the Chippeway or Saulteaux Nation the present, or quit rent, consisting of one hundred pounds weight of good merchantable tobacco, to be delivered on or before the tenth day of October, at the Forks of the Assiniboine River; and to the Chiefs and Warriors of the Kinstineaux or Cree Nation, a like present, or quit rent, of one hundred pounds of tobacco, to be delivered to them on or before the said tenth day of October, at Portage de la Prairie, on the banks of Assiniboine River. Provided always that the traders hitherto established upon any part of the above-mentioned tract of land shall not be molested in the possession of the lands which they have already cultivated and improved, till his Majesty's pleasure shall be known.

Treaty with Red River Indians.

In witness whereof the Chiefs aforesaid have set their marks at the Forks of Red River on the day aforesaid.

Signed, SELKIRK.

Signed in presence of Thomas Thomas, James Bird, F. Matthey, Captain; P. D. Orsonnens, Captain; Miles McDonell, J. Bate, Chr. De Lovimier, Louis Nolin, Interpreter; and the following Chiefs, each of whom made his mark, being a rude outline of some animal.

Moche W. Keocab (Le Sonent); Ouckidoat (Premier alias Grande Oreilles); Mechudewikonaie (La Robe Noire); Kayajickebinoa (L'Homme Noir); Pegawis.

As a matter of fact, the Saulteaux Indians, who were given precedence in the above treaty, had no real claim to the lands on the Red River, which were possessed by the Crees alone. This latter tribe afterwards took great offence at this circumstance and made various threats to recede from their covenant and claim their lands from the settlers. These threats, however, were not carried out. Selkirk having in this manner arranged all to his satisfaction, bade farewell to Red River, and accompanied by a guide and a few friends, directed his course southward across the frontier into American territory. He made his way to New York and there embarked for England.

It has been remarked that his Majesty's commissioners flattered themselves that in the formal and peaceful manner described, law and order was to be introduced into the North-West.

It is true that the proclamation of the Prince Regent and the creation of the commission of inquiry had quieted much of the turbulence, and that all who came in contact with the recognized officers were ready to submit to their authority; but it was by no means so in the more remotely situated departments.

Governor Robertson, Semple's lieutenant, had delegated his authority to Clarke, another ex-employee of the North-West Company. This trader now sought upon Lord Selkirk's authority to penetrate, with an effective force, and a quantity of merchandise, into the very heart of the territory occupied by the North-Westers. One of Clarke's first acts on arriving at Peace River was to attack Fort Vermilion, with the design of acquiring a supply of provisions; but here he met with so vigorous a resistance that he was constrained to beat a retreat without having succeeded in his project. On the other hand, two partners, Black and McGillivray, on the pretence that Robertson had incited the savages to massacre some of their number, and that their men would refuse to serve if an example were not made, took him prisoner to Fort Athabasca, and there confined him during an entire winter. There

Attack on Fort Vermilion.

were numerous examples of the abuse of force and the utter abandonment to lawlessness during this and the following year.

Upon most of those Northmen named in the warrants issued at the instance of the Earl of Selkirk, it had been impossible to serve papers owing to their absence in the distant fur country. Williams, Semple's successor as Governor of the colony of Assiniboia, was consumed with a desire to effect the arrest of all those persons himself. It is possible that he also wished to avenge the incarceration of Robertson. Taking with him a number of De Meuron soldiers and two pieces of cannon, Governor Williams departed to lie in ambush for the North-Westers at a portage called Grand Rapids, which spot it was necessary for the enemy to pass in order to enter Lake Winnipeg. Beyond question, the North-Westers had no suspicion of what was in store for them, inasmuch as the party did not arrive in a large body, but in small detachments, and successively, often at an interval of several days. As fast as they arrived, however, Governor Williams and his soldiers were on the watch. It was new work to the veterans, but they entered into it with a zest and spirit. The North-Westers were seized and disarmed, being subjected to considerable violence. Some were permitted to continue their route; others were dispatched to York Factory, on the Bay. Here they were, during many weeks, detained as prisoners and treated with scant courtesy, up to the arrival of a certain British naval officer. This was Lieut. Franklin, who was then about to undertake his celebrated land voyage to the Arctic Sea. Franklin had in his possession several letters of introduction to partners in the North-West Company. Under these circumstances the consideration, not to say compassion, which he evinced for the Hudson's Bay Company's prisoners was much in their favour. McTavish and Shaw, two of the North-West partners, were granted permission to return to England as passengers on the ship which had brought Franklin, but the others were not so fortunate. Duncan Campbell was sent to Canada, *via* Moose Factory and Michipicoten, and there placed at liberty. As to

Arrest of Nor'-Westers.

Benjamin Frobisher, there was no accusation or warrant of arrest against him, but it was felt that he should not escape punishment for his long hostility to the Company, as well as for the violent and crafty resistance which he had offered in the first instance to his arrest. Frobisher is described as being a man of great strength and herculean stature. On numerous occasions he had had the good or ill-fortune to come in contact with the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, and there were many to testify that he had on such occasions not emerged with the loss either of prestige or property. His whole ambition now, whilst suffering from a severe wound in the head, was to escape from his captors. The nearest North-West post was distant about five hundred miles as the crow flies, but this circumstance had little restraining power upon his project. Two of his French-Canadian companions, Turcotte and Lépine, endeavoured to dissuade him, but without success; and at length they consented to participate in the escape should it be possible to elude the vigilance of their captors. They succeeded in doing this on the 30th September; launched themselves in an old canoe, into which they had stored some pounds of pemmican saved from their rations, and so commenced their painful journey.

For two whole months these three fugitives from York Factory travelled through the wilderness. They suffered from cold and hunger, even devouring the buffalo skins that the Indians had left suspended in the trees as an indication of their route. At last the doughty Frobisher arrived at such a state of weakness that he was fain to lie down without further power of exertion. The trio were then not more than two days' journey from Lac L'Orignal, near Lake Bourbon, where the North-Westers had a post. Frobisher begged his companions, whose greater power of endurance and devotion to their superior had led to their carrying him on their shoulders, to leave him and seek assistance. This they did, after having deposited their burden at the side of a fire, and grilled a morsel of buffalo skin for his nourishment. Four days later they reached the fort, and a search party did

Flight of prisoners from York Factory.

not arrive on the spot until the 27th of November. Their eyes were greeted by the corpse of Frobisher, partly burnt, and extended at full length on the ground. Within his scanty clothing was found a journal, which he had kept ever since his arrest at Grand Rapids, and in which he had recorded his daily sufferings.*

After considerable delay the news of Frobisher's escape and subsequent death was spread throughout the West. A courier arrived at Fort William in hot haste with the news of the affair at Grand Rapids. The utmost indignation prevailed. Many of the partners, fearing a descent of the Hudson's Bay soldiery, left in disorder for Montreal. The agents of the Company instantly addressed themselves to the Duke of Richmond, then Governor of Canada, representing to him that if the civil authorities did not interfere to compel respect for the orders of the Prince Regent, the fortunes of the North-West co-partnery would suffer a great and irreparable blow.

The Duke was then at Little York. He lost no time in dispatching one of the officers of his suite, Major MacLeod, with a budget of dispatches for delivery at the chief forts of the North-West. In these he enjoined obedience to the laws. MacLeod was accompanied, at the last moment, by Sir Charles Saxton. The envoys of the Governor reached Fort William and pressed on to the Grand Rapids, where they learned that Williams had raised the blockade of the river, and had left for the Bay with his soldiers and prisoners. It was too late in the autumn to follow them, so there was nothing left but to arrange to have their dispatches forwarded to the parties in the interior, and to return immediately to Little York. The alarm of the partners in Canada was matched by that of their agents in London. They addressed themselves to the Imperial Government, soliciting his Majesty's interference in order to put an end to the outrages and lawlessness, as they expressed it, of Lord Selkirk and the Hudson's Bay Company. They recalled that they had often demanded that the rights of the Company should be submitted to law, and

Envoys of the Government enjoin peace.

* Benjamin Frobisher was a native of York, England.

warned the authorities that when their rivals mocked the orders of the Prince Regent, it would be impossible for themselves to confide their persons and their property to the protection of an authority with a seat so remote and exacting, so reluctant an obedience.

"What is to become of us," they demanded, "if we are to have no protection for our servants in these wild regions of the North?"

"You have no right in these regions," was, in effect, the retort of the Company. "They are vested in us by Royal charter, and the sooner you apprehend this truth the better."

Whereupon the partners declared that if the Hudson's Bay Company or Lord Selkirk continued to exercise illegal powers, which had for their end the destruction of the commerce of their rivals, it was inevitable that more bloodshed should follow. Such protestations had the desired effect. The Government entered into correspondence with the directors of the Company and ordered that they should exert themselves to the utmost to prevent a repetition of lawlessness, else the consequences must be on their own head.

The trials which took place at Little York and at Montreal had been very costly to both parties. Those relating to the Semple massacre were not tried until 1818.* Application had been made to the Governor-in-Chief of Canada in the previous March (1817) to have them removed to Upper

* At the trials at York in October, 1818, Sherwood, the North-West Company's counsel, continually demanded to know why Semple was called governor. "Why," he exclaimed, with ludicrous energy, "why should this gentleman be continually dignified by the appellation of governor? The indictment charged that Robert Semple was killed and murdered; it said nothing about his being a governor. If he was a governor, then he was also an emperor. Yes, gentlemen," shrieked the counsel, working himself up to fever heat, "I repeat, an emperor—a bashaw in that land of milk and honey, where nothing, not even a blade of corn, will ripen. Who made him governor? Did the King? Did the Prince Regent? No; this pretended authority was an illegal assumption of power, arrogating to itself prerogatives such as are not exercised even by the King of England. I demand that Robert Semple be called Robert Semple—but as he was not a governor let us not be ———"

"Come, come," cried Chief Justice Powell, "do let this trial go on! It is no matter whether he was or was not a governor, or what he was called, or called himself, he is not to be murdered, though he was not a governor."

Canada, and this naturally caused delay, the Governor judging it expedient to consult the Home Government in the matter. A favourable reply was received on the 24th of October, and warrants under the Great Seal were issued to try the cases at York. The North-Westers were finally brought before the court, and indictments found against them for participating in the affairs of the 11th of June, and the 28th of June, 1815; for larceny at Qu'Appelle River on the 12th of May, and the Semple massacre on the 19th of June, 1816. It surprised nobody in Canada that the jury in each case brought in a verdict of not guilty, however it may have astonished the British public.

Trial of Semple's murderers.

McGillivray, who had been waiting two years for trial, and now finding the further indictments abandoned, caused Lord Selkirk, Miles McDonnell, and eighteen others, to be indicted for the part they took in the capture of Fort William. The Earl had also several civil suits entered against him, one of which was by William Smith, the constable whom he ejected from Fort William, "taking hold of him and pushing him out of doors, and afterwards keeping him in close custody in the fort, under a military guard." The constable got a verdict of £500 damages against the Earl. Daniel McKenzie also entered suit against Lord Selkirk, and received a verdict of £1,500.

Whilst these various proceedings were in progress, the Red River colony was struggling against adversity. In the winter of 1817 they were forced to resort again to Pembina, owing to a scarcity of food. The next year, when a considerable area of land had been planted, and followed by a favourable summer, the July sky suddenly darkened, and a cloud of grasshoppers descended upon the earth. Every green thing perished before them. In greater despair and wretchedness than ever, the colonists again migrated across the border. The same disaster occurred in the ensuing year, and if it had not been for the bounty and care of the Company, many would have perished. It was not until 1822 that the Red River colony, now recruited by French, Irish, German

and Swiss, as well as Scotch settlers, began to take on a flourishing condition; but the news of this prosperity was not destined to reach the ears and gladden the heart of its founder. Selkirk had reached England disheartened, and with a well-founded grievance against the Canadian authorities, who, he declares, and with justice, had not accorded him the encouragement to which he had a right; and against the Canadian tribunals, from whom it had been impossible to obtain justice.

Prosperity at Red River.

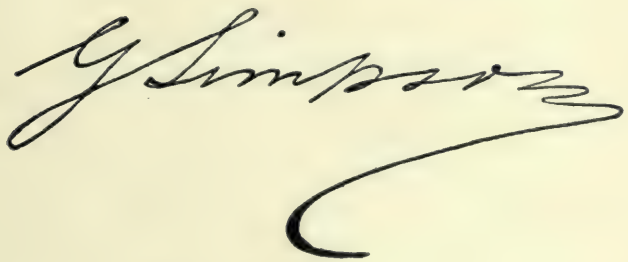
The health of the Earl, shattered by the anxieties and episodes which have been recorded, rendered it necessary that he should seek repose in the south of France. But his ailment was mortal. He breathed his last at Pau, in the month of April, 1820, surrounded by his wife and children, leaving behind him many friends, and numerous admirers of his intellectual qualities and his courage. The Great North-West of to-day is his monument.

The death of its principal Adventurer strengthened, on the part of the Company, the sentiment for peace; and by removing the chief obstacle hastened an amalgamation of interests of the rival traders. None then could nor can now but perceive, if they examine the situation broadly, that the complete annihilation of the North-West Association was a mere matter of time. None recognized this more than their agents in London, who had repeatedly made overtures to Lord Selkirk for amalgamation, but which were by him rejected as often as made.

To Edward Ellice, a leading partner, an enterprising merchant, and a rising parliamentarian, belongs the chief credit of bringing about this union. This young man was the son of Alexander Ellice, a wealthy London merchant, and himself directly interested in the Canadian fur-trade. In 1803, when a lad of but fourteen, young Ellice had gone out to Canada, and animated by a love of adventure, had entered into the life of a trader, under the auspices of his father's friends. Ellice was quick to grasp the tendency of affairs. The

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terrible struggle of recent years made by the Northmen had told severely upon them.*

The partners met at Fort William, in July, 1820, and a stormy session served to reflect their vexed plight. Dissensions exhibited themselves; the minority, at least, felt that in their London agents—Ellice and the McGillivrays—coming to terms with the Hudson's Bay Company, lay their only hope of salvation.

Without, however, consulting the powers at Fort William, these agents in London were acting on their own account. Conferences with the Chartered Adventurers took place daily. By the time the partnership between the Northmen themselves expired, in 1821, the negotiations had attained the form of an agreement. Delegates had been sent from Fort William to confer with their English representatives as to the future of the interests of the North-West Company. Ellice received them cordially in his office in Mark Lane and showed them an instrument which he called the Deed Poll. This document bore the names of the Governor, Berens, and the Committee of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company, on the one part, and the McGillivrays and Ellice, on the other. The astonished delegates gazed upon the signed and sealed instrument, and recognized that the North-West Company had ceased to exist. "Amalgamation," cried one of them, "this is not amalgamation, but submersion. We are drowned men."

Union of the two Companies.

A coalition and partnership had been agreed upon for twenty-one years, on the basis that each should furnish an equal capital for conducting the trade. This Deed Poll, which bore date of March 26, 1821, provided that the expenses of the establishment should be paid out of the trade, and that no expense of colonization or any commerce not directly relating to the fur-trade, was to fall upon the Company.

* "Ses postes," says Senator Masson, "avient été pillés et devastés; ses exportatiors considerablement sédintes." On the other hand, he adds, these losses were partly compensated for by the high prices secured in England for their furs.

The profits were to be divided into one hundred equal parts, of which forty were to be shared between the chief factors and chief traders, according to profit and loss. If a loss should occur in one year on these forty shares it was to be made good out of the profits of the year ensuing. A general inventory and account was to be made out annually on the 1st of June. If profits were not paid to any parties within fourteen days of that date, interest was to be allowed then at the rate of five per cent.

When the Deed Poll was signed, it was stipulated that twenty-five chief factors and twenty-eight chief traders should be appointed, to be named in alternate succession from the Hudson's Bay and the North-West Company's servants. Both were placed on an equal footing, the forty shares out of the hundred being again subdivided into eighty-five shares, in order that each of the twenty-five chief factors should receive two (or $\frac{2}{8}\frac{2}{5}$ths), and each of the chief traders one of such shares. The remaining seven shares, to complete the eighty-five, were set apart for old servants, to be paid them during a term of seven years.

The chief factors were to superintend the business of the Company at their respective stations, while the chief traders under them were to conduct the commerce with the Indians. The third class was the clerks, who were promoted to factorships and traderships, according to good conduct and seniority, but whose clerical salaries ranged from £20 to £100 per annum. The chief factors and traders, who wintered in the interior, were granted, in addition to their share of profits, certain personal necessaries free of cost. They were not, however, permitted to carry on any private trade on their own account with the Indians. Strict accounts were required of them annually. The councils at the various posts were empowered to mulct, admonish or suspend any of the Company's servants. Each year three chief factors and two chief traders were granted twelve months leave of absence. A chief factor or chief trader, after wintering three years in the service might retire, and hold his full share of profits for one year after so retiring,

Plan of union.

with half the share for the four succeeding years. If he wintered for five years, he was granted half profits for six years on retiring. Retirements of chief factors and chief traders were made annually by rotation, three of the former, or two of the former and two of the latter. The heirs of a chief factor or chief trader who died after wintering five years received all the benefit to which the deceased or himself would have been entitled had he lived, or in proportion otherwise. Everything was thus regulated, provision was effected for everything. The Northmen, rough, enterprising, adventurous, as many of them were, found themselves part of a huge machine, operated with sleepless vigilance of a governor and committee in London. As for the profits, they were to be estimated after the entire expenses, both in London and the fur country, were deducted. They were then to be divided into fifths, of which three-fifths went to the proprietary and two-fifths to the chief factors, chief traders and clerks, who were to be thenceforward known as the "fur-trade" or the "wintering partners."

No wonder that many of the Northmen were constrained to cry out, in the language of one of their number*: "Alas, the North-West is now beginning to be ruled with an iron rod!"

* Wentzel.



CHAPTER XXXIII.

1821–1847.

The Deed Poll—A Governor-in-Chief Chosen—A Chaplain Appointed—New License from George IV.—Trade on the Pacific Coast—The Red River Country Claimed by the States — The Company in California—The Oregon Question—Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825—The *Dryad* Affair — Lieutenant Franklin's two Expeditions—Red River Territory Yielded to Company—Enterprise on the Pacific.

By the terms of the Deed Poll, the immediate control of the Company's affairs in its territory passed from the hands of a committee sitting in London, to a personage known as Governor-in-Chief of Rupert's Land and his council. His commission extended over all the Company's lands and possessions, with an unlimited tenure of office. The council was to be composed of chief factors, and occasionally a few chief traders, who were to meet at some convenient centre for the purposes of consultation, this particular feature being a survival of the rendezvous of Fort William. The chartered territories and circuit of commercial relations were divided into vast sections, known as the Northern, Southern, Montreal and Western Departments. The Northern extended between Hudson's Bay and the Rocky Mountains, the Southern, between James' Bay and Canada, including a part of the eastern shore of Hudson's Bay.

Such a Governor-in-Chief should be a person of energy, shrewdness and ability. Mr. Ellice had been struck by the qualities and special aptitude for this important post of a young Scotchman, named George Simpson. This young man was an illegitimate son of the maternal uncle of Thomas Simpson, the Arctic explorer. While clerk in a London counting-house, George Simpson had attracted the attention of Andrew Colville, Lord Selkirk's brother-in-law, who sent him to Rupert's Land in the service of the Company. The responsibility was a tremendous one, but Simpson did not flinch from accepting it; and the end

showed the wisdom of the appointment. For nearly forty years this man stood at the head of the fur-trade: a potentate in the midst of the wilderness, the virtual ruler of almost one-half of a continent. Governor Simpson was a man of small stature, but he had "the self-possession of an emperor."* Accompanied by his voyageurs and clerks, he journeyed along the old Ottawa and lake route, through the Grand Portage, or by Fort William and Lake of the Woods, accomplishing this feat at least once a year throughout the entire period of his rule. At the outset of his career he perceived that the management of Red River colony was an extremely difficult task—harder perhaps than the management of the fur-trade. But he attacked both with energy, resolved to serve his employers, and to create, at all hazards, harmony and prosperity in the territories.

Governor Simpson.

Part of the time he spent at Red River, part in Oregon, in Athabasca, and at Hudson's Bay. He crossed the Rocky Mountains at three different latitudes, and journeyed extensively over the vast territory of which he was truly the "commercial sovereign."

The appointment of the Rev. Mr. West as principal chaplain to the Company led to very great improvements in the moral and religious life at the forts. Many of the traders and servants of the Company were soon afterwards induced to marry the women with whom they had lived, a material step towards the amelioration of the condition of the Indian and half-breed females.

The next step on the part of the Honourable Adventurers was to further safeguard their interests, and supplement their charter by a license from the new king, George IV. This license was for the exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians in such parts of North America as were not part of

* In March, 1821, Wentzel, one of the North-West partners, wrote: "The Hudson's Bay Company have apparently relaxed in the extravagance of their measures; last autumn they came in the [Athabasca] Department with fifteen canoes only, containing each about fifteen pieces. Mr. Simpson, a gentleman from England last spring, superintends their business. His being a strange, and reputedly gentlemanly, man, will not create much alarm, nor do I presume him formidable as an Indian trader."

the territories heretofore granted to the Hudson's Bay Company. This Royal license, dated the 5th of December, 1821, at Carlton House, was expressly issued to prevent the admission of individual or associated bodies into the British North American fur-trade, inasmuch as the competition

Company obtains a new license.



THE BOARD ROOM, HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE, LONDON.

therein had been found for years to be productive of enormous loss and inconvenience to the Hudson's Bay Company and to trade at large, and also of much injury to the natives and half-breeds.

To anticipate events, it may here be remarked that this license expired in 1842, but prior to its expiration an extension was granted at the close of the first year of the reign of

her present Majesty,* for a further term of twenty-one years. By virtue of these licenses the Company was granted exclusive trade in the Indian territories west of the Rocky Mountains. It must be borne in mind, and will be pointed out in a subsequent chapter, that it was of the utmost moment for Great Britain to obtain a standing in Oregon and on the Columbia River,† and the licenses were framed to this great and desirable end.

Although, as has been shown, the North-West partners had made great efforts and borne great sacrifices to maintain the trade on the Pacific, they were contending against great odds. The Russian establishments at Norfolk Sound, and at other places on the coast, even so far south as California, came to share in a virtual monopoly with the Americans, who, after the Treaty of Ghent, began to send ships from Boston to New York. The amalgamation of 1821 came about, and the Hudson's Bay Company, invigorated by the infusion of new blood, believed it their duty to seek to regain the trade. They therefore set to work to re-establish British influence on the Pacific.

It was no easy task. The Russians had gained a firm foothold, and the Americans paused at no form of competition, nor any method by which they might secure their ends. The natives had already become debauched and now their debauchery spread from tribe to tribe, rendering dealings with them difficult and formidable. Serious losses, both of lives and property, were sustained through their savage attacks on the Company's agents and trading posts. But the work was in the hands of strong, able, and temperate men, who knew what the situation required of them and did not shrink from meeting it fully and fearlessly. By tact and vigorous measures the natives were restrained ; at great expenditure of money and patience, order was restored ; and in ten years

* May 30th, 1838.

† "Such is the spirit and avidity exhibited by the Council," wrote one of the Company's factors, in 1823, "that it is believed these discoveries will be extended as far as the Russian settlements on the Pacific Ocean."

time the Company occupied the whole country between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific. It maintained six permanent establishments on the coasts, sixteen in the interior, and several movable posts and migratory brigades. By 1835 it had a fleet of six armed vessels, one of them propelled by steam, on the Pacific. Fort Vancouver, its principal *entrepôt* on the Columbia River, was surrounded by large pasture and grain farms, maintaining large herds of horses and cattle, and was a profitable and growing establishment.

It was a long time since the Company had cut any considerable figure in international politics, but with the extraordinary growth of the American States and the increase of the fur traffic of the Russians, contemporary European publicists came again to speak of the prospect of trouble over the Company's rights and boundaries.

Before this time there had arisen a cry, sedulously seconded by the Company's enemies, that the Red River region belonged to the United States. Nothing can be clearer than that it was never for a moment contemplated either by the British or American Government, that any of the Hudson's Bay lands, or any of the waters running into Hudson's Bay, would be included in the lines assigned as the boundaries between the possessions of Great Britain and those of the States. It is sufficiently demonstrated by the treaty concluded with America in 1794 that such an idea never existed in the minds of the negotiators. By the third article of that treaty, which permits the most perfect freedom of communication and intercourse between the subjects of both nations throughout their respective dominions, an exception is made of the country within the limits of the Hudson's Bay Company, to be ascertained, of course, in conformity to their charter from which the Americans are expressly excluded. The terms of the treaty concluded in 1783 with the United States show the express intentions of both nations to have been that the northern boundary of the United States should not, in any part, extend farther north than the River St. Lawrence, or the lakes and streams which feed or fall into it.

Claim of the United States to Red River.

The unhappy feature of the matter was that a great part of the second article of the treaty of 1783 was drawn up in complete ignorance of the geography of the country. It is so full of contradictions that it became impossible afterwards to lay down a line which should follow that article literally. In this



RED RIVER CART.

dilemma the only fair method of solving the difficulty was to return to the principles which governed the framing of the article.

At the close of the Revolution the chief aim of the American negotiators, as is evinced throughout their correspondence,

was to obtain a recognition of the right of their country to the western territory as far as the St. Lawrence on the north, and the Mississippi on the west. When the British Government acceded to this proposition it was regarded by the Americans as an important concession, and their plenipotentiaries proceeded upon that concession as the principle on which their boundary towards Canada, after it had struck the St. Lawrence, was to be defined. They brought the line from Nova Scotia to the St. Lawrence, and then followed up the main stream of the river to what they believed to be its principal source, and what was supposed to approach the nearest to the source of the Mississippi. In fanciful conformity to this intention, the second article of the treaty of 1783, after having carried the line to Lake Superior, stipulates that it shall be continued onwards through the middle of certain water communications to the north-west point of the Lake of the Woods, and thence due west to the Mississippi. The fact, however, is that the waters of the Lake of the Woods feed streams which fall into Hudson's Bay, but have no communication with any waters which fall into Lake Superior. It is also a fact that a line drawn due west from the Lake of the Woods would never reach the Mississippi, which lies far to the south of such a line.

The Treaty of 1783.

But there was a reason for such egregious blundering. The country had never been surveyed by men of science. Its physical features had been derived from the vague and inaccurate accounts of ignorant traders and bushrangers, which had formed the basis for the current maps. These laid down a large river running from the Lake of the Woods and falling into Lake Superior. If there had been such a river in existence, there can be no doubt, from the body of waters contained in the Lake of the Woods, that it would have been a much larger stream than any of the feeders of Lake Superior. It was therefore most natural that the negotiators should suppose the Lake of the Woods to be the main source of the St. Lawrenee. At the same time this must have appeared to them the point at which the waters of the St.

Lawrence approached the nearest to the source of the Mississippi, because in the maps of the bushrangers the Mississippi is laid down as rising four or five degrees of latitude farther north than it does in fact, and as coming within a short distance of the Lake of the Woods on the west.

As the negotiators in Paris in 1783 reposed the greatest confidence in these crude productions of the cartographer, is it surprising that the second article of the treaty should be full of inconsistencies? On any other supposition the intention of the negotiators would be fatuous and incomprehensible.

This brings us to the whole point involved in the American contention, which deprived Great Britain and the Company of a vast territory to which the United States possessed no shadow of right. Where the limits of a country have never been ascertained the conquest of the contiguous and encroaching territory may be justly considered as establishing the bounds originally claimed by the victorious nation; and this was the case with regard to Canada and the territory of the Company. But where between two powers there have been no defined limits, and no conquests have determined the claims of either, the pretensions of both might be fairly adjusted by laying down as a rule that "the priority of right should be considered as vested in each, to the respective countries, which each have either principally or exclusively frequented."

Examination of American claims.

The Spaniards west of the Mississippi never extended their establishments nearly so far north as latitude 42, while the Hudson's Bay limits were long frequented by the English. On what ground, therefore, could the Americans, the successors merely to the rights derived from the Spaniards, claim all the country of the Sioux, the Mandans and many other tribes on the upper branches of the Missouri?

Nevertheless the States, after their purchase of Louisiana, continued to put in claims for a more northerly and westerly boundary, with what ultimate result we shall see. It is only pertinent to remark here, that nothing could be more absurd

than the idea that Spain ever contemplated the cession of any territory on the Pacific Ocean, under the name of Louisiana.

The interior river waters of the Sacramento and San Joaquin had attracted the attention of the Company even before the American trappers had reached them, and traders remained there in unmolested possession long after the Russians had left the country. The feeble frontier guard could do nothing but protest, and ultimately when the trappers had nearly exhausted the outlying districts and desired to penetrate into the centre of the State, the American Government admitted them under an agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company, whereby a tax of fifty cents was to be paid for each beaver skin.

A year before the amalgamation the north-west coast for the first time engaged the attention of the American Government,* and what came to be known as the Oregon Question had its birth. The States possessed no title to the country, but a strong party believed that they had a right to found by occupation a legitimate title to a large portion of the territory in question. The matter was brought up at several sessions of Congress, and the utmost was done by such legislators as Floyd and Benton to flog it into an active issue. It was claimed that "the United States, through Spain, France and her own establishments, had the undisputed sovereignty of the coast from latitude 60° down to 36°." A bill was introduced for the occupation of the Columbia, grants of lands to settlers, and regulation of Indian affairs. But the Government was by no means so sure of the wisdom of such a proceeding; the bill was repeatedly shelved. The restoration of Fort George (Astoria) by the British was one of the strong arguments used.

In the meanwhile Russia had declared that the north Pacific coast down to latitude 51° belonged to her exclusively. All foreign vessels were prohibited from approaching within a hundred Italian miles of any part of the coast. America pro-

* On motion of Mr. Congressman Floyd, a committee was appointed in December, 1820, "to enquire into the situation of the settlements upon the Pacific Ocean, and the expediency of occupying the Columbia River."

tested, and between 1821 and 1824 negotiations were carried on between the two powers.

Russia flatly asserted that the boundary question was one between herself and Great Britain, with which the Americans had no legitimate concern; and offered proofs that the treaty with Spain gave the United States a right only to territory south of 42°. A conclusion was, however, reached in the Treaty of 1824, by which the boundary was fixed at 54° 40′, beyond which neither nation was to found any establishment, or to resort, without permission; while for a period of ten years both nations were to have free access for trade and fishery to each other's territory.

Russian claims.

In the following year was concluded a treaty between Russia and Great Britain,* by which the former again relinquished her claim not only to the region below latitude 54° 40′, but to the vast interior occupied by the Company up to the Frozen Ocean. No objection to this was urged by America, although some of her statesmen sought to take a hand in the matter, and proposed a joint conference. Great Britain's reply to this proposition was to decline to recognize the right of the United States to any interest in the territory in question. The recent promulgation of the Monroe doctrine had given offence not only to her, but to Russia as well, and both were prepared to combat American pretensions.

Although his Majesty's ministers had refused to treat for a joint convention, yet in 1824 negotiations were begun in London, between Great Britain and America, for the ownership of the northern Pacific coast. The British commissioners showed clearly that the Americans had no valid claim to the territory occupied by the Company.

The mere entrance of a private individual, such as Captain Gray, into a river could not give the States a claim up and down the coast to regions which had been previously explored by officially despatched British expeditions like that of Cook. It was emphatically denied that the restoration of Fort Astoria, under the Treaty of Ghent, had any bearing on the

* See Appendix for copy of this Treaty.

title. Nevertheless, Great Britain was willing to accept as a boundary the forty-ninth parallel from the mountains to the Columbia (then known as McGillivray River), and down that river to the sea. But the Americans were obdurate ; a deadlock ensued and the convention of 1818 remained in force. The Company repeatedly urged the Government not to abandon one inch of territory rightfully under the Crown, to the United States. Nevertheless, a settlement of the Oregon Question was highly desirable. If in spite of the treaty of 1818 the States should attempt to occupy the territory, war



Fur Train from the Far North.

would be inevitable. If on the other hand the treaty should expire without any attempt at American occupation, Great Britain would be, by the law of nations, the party rightfully in possession. A new conference was held in London, in 1827 ; but it was impossible to agree on a boundary, and the only thing possible was a compromise to the effect that the treaty of joint occupation should be indefinitely renewed subject to abrogation at any time by either party on twelve months' notice. Thus the *statu quo* was

Temporary arrangement between England and the States.

maintained, and the Hudson's Bay Company remained in actual possession and of the profits of the fur-trade for many years to come.

In 1828 Governor Simpson believed it advisable to make a general survey of the western posts, with the object of impressing peace and good-will upon the natives, and also to acquire a further knowledge of the needs and abilities of the Company's officers and servants in that quarter. This journey of the Governor, undertaken in considerable state, was from York Factory to the Pacific. He was accompanied by a chief factor, Archibald Macdonald, and a surgeon named Hamlyn. Fourteen commissioned gentlemen, as the chief factors and chief traders were called, and as many clerks, accompanied the party to the canoes, and amidst great cheering and a salute of seven guns, bade them God-speed. Simpson entered Peace River on the 15th of August, and reached Fort Vermilion in due course, three hundred and twenty miles from the mouth, which was then in charge of Paul Fraser. From here he proceeded to Fort St. James, the capital of Western Caledonia, and the chief depot for all the region north of the Fraser Forks to the Russian boundary, including the Babine country. Forts Alexandria, Kamloops and Vancouver were visited in due order, and in the following year Simpson returned east by way of the Columbia.

In an attempt to enter the Columbia River in 1829, the Company's ship from London, *William and Ann*, was wrecked on Land Island. Several of the crew escaped and landed on Clatsop Point, where they were immediately murdered by the natives, in order that the plunder of the vessel might be accomplished without interruption. News of the disaster was carried to Fort Vancouver, where the officer in charge, McLaughlin, sent messengers demanding a restoration of the stolen cargo. In response to this request, an old broom was despatched to the fort, with the intelligence that this was all the restitution the Clatsops contemplated. The schooner *Colbore* was therefore sent on a punitive expedition. Several of the tribe were wounded and a chief shot, after which the

Clatsops entered into a better frame of mind, and expressed contrition for their behaviour.

Under the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825, the Company possessed the free navigation of streams which, having their rise in British territory, crossed Russian territory in their course to the sea. The Company were not long in availing themselves of this privilege. Posts were successively erected, as far as the Stickeen River; but seven years afterwards there was yet no permanent post on that stream. It was, therefore, decided to establish one, and a brig, the *Dryad*, was accordingly fitted out and despatched from Fort Vancouver. But in that year, 1833, the Russian Government had received the petition of its subjects to rescind the proviso in the treaty favourable to the British. The Company's enterprise in thus encroaching on Russian territory had alarmed Wrangel, who was then in charge of the Russian establishment * at Sitka, and he wrote to his superiors urging them to memorialize the Emperor. He alleged that the Hudson's Bay Company had violated its agreement to refrain from selling fire-arms or spirituous liquors to the natives—an allegation which was not founded on fact.

Believing that the situation called for instant action, Wrangel did not wait to learn what course his Government would take in the matter, but at once despatched two armed vessels to the entrance of Stickeen River. A fort was hastily built on the site of an Indian village, guns were mounted, and the Company's expedition awaited. All unconscious the *Dryad* force approached. Suddenly a puff of smoke and a loud report arrested them, and several shots came from two vessels hitherto concealed in the offing. While the astonished captain and crew put the brig about, with a design to anchor out of

The "Dryad" appears.

* The Russian Company was incorporated under the patronage of the Crown with a capital of two hundred and sixty thousand pounds sterling. It had a large commerce with Northern China which did not deal with Canton; and it was in the northern part of the empire that the consumption of furs was greatest. Canton was merely the *entrepôt* where furs were received for distribution throughout China.

range, a boat reached them from the shore, bearing an officer in Russian uniform. He protested in the name of the Emperor and the Governor of the Russian-American possessions, against the entrance of a British vessel into a river appertaining to those powers. The Company's agent attempted to argue the matter, but his representations went unheeded. The Russian was obdurate; they were all threatened with peril to their lives, and their vessel, if the *Dryad* did not immediately weigh anchor. There was consequently nothing to do but to return.

The Company was indignant at this outrage. The forts it had already built, together with the cost of fitting out the *Dryad* and other vessels, besides a vast quantity of provisions and perishable merchandise sent into that country, had amounted to £20,000 sterling. The Emperor had granted the petition of the Russian Company; and both the British and the American Governments received notification that the clause in the treaty would terminate at twelve months' notice. But the *Dryad* affair took place before this decision was made public. The British Government very properly demanded immediate satisfaction, and for a time public interest was keenly aroused. The Russian Government merely consented to disavow the act of its officer; and issued instructions prohibiting further hindrance to the trading limits previously agreed upon.

The matter did not, however, receive settlement until 1839, in which year a convention was held in London to arrange the points long in dispute between the two companies. The matter was settled with despatch. The Hudson's Bay Company's claim for compensation was waived in return for a lease from the Russian Company of all their territory on the mainland lying between Cape Spencer and latitude 54° 40′. For this lease the Company agreed to pay an annual rental of two thousand land-otter skins, and also to supply the Russians with provisions at moderate rates.

In the last chapter, the expedition in 1819-20 of Lieutenant (afterwards Sir John) Franklin, was alluded to.

Franklin and his party reached Fort Chippewyan on the 26th March, after having travelled on foot eight hundred and fifty-six miles, with the weather so intensely cold that the mercury continually froze in the bulb. In July, 1820, they journeyed five hundred miles more to Fort Enterprise, where the party wintered, Back returning to Fort Chippewyan to procure supplies for the next season's operations. He was eagerly awaited, and when he arrived, in March, 1821, he had a tale of great hardship to relate. He had travelled over one thousand one hundred miles, sometimes going two or three days without food, with no covering at night but a blanket and deer-skins to protect him from the fearful rigours of fifty-seven degrees below zero. In June the party started out from the Coppermine to reach the sea, which they did in eighteen days. Their subsequent sufferings were of the most dreadful description. When the survivors returned to York Factory, they had travelled five thousand five hundred and fifty miles by land and water; but their object was still unaccomplished.*

In 1825, Franklin entered upon a second journey to the shores of the Polar Sea, again accompanied by Lieutenant Back and Peter Dease, one of the Company's chief traders.

"The Governor and Committee took," says Franklin, "a most lively interest in the objects of the expedition, promised their utmost support to it, and forthwith sent injunctions to their officers in the fur countries to provide the necessary depots of provisions at the places which I pointed out, and to give every other aid in their power."

Franklin descended the Mackenzie and traced the coast line through thirty-seven degrees of longitude from the mouth of the Coppermine River, where his former survey began, to near the one hundred and fiftieth meridian, and coming within one hundred and sixty miles of the most easterly point

* From Joseph Berens, Esq., the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company and the gentlemen of the Committee, I received all kinds of assistance and information, communicated in the most friendly manner previous to my leaving England; and I had the gratification of perusing the orders to their agents and servants in North America, containing the fullest directions to promote by every means the progress of the expedition.—*Sir John Franklin.*

reached by Captain Beechy, who was exploring from Bering's Strait.

In 1832 the protracted absence of Captain (afterwards Sir John) Ross, who had sailed three years before for the Polar regions, became cause for anxiety. It was decided to send an expedition, commanded by Captain Back, in search of this



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SIR GEORGE BACK, R.N.

explorer, and the Government granted £2,000 towards the expense, "it being understood that the Hudson's Bay Company will furnish the supplies and canoes free of charge, and that the remainder of the expense, which is estimated at £3,000, will be contributed by Captain Ross's friends." The expedition sailed, but after it had been absent one year, news reached them * that Ross had returned safe and sound in

* "The extraordinary expedition with which this despatch was transmitted by the Hudson's Bay Company," says Back, "is worthy of being recorded."

England ; and Captain Back was ordered to attempt a completion of the coast line of the north-eastern extremity of North America. The Company, through Sir George Simpson, nominated four officers, in its service, to be placed under Back's command.

In 1834 there was witnessed a confirmation of the Deed Poll of 1821, with a more definite prescription of the duties and emoluments of the Company's servants.

It was not until the year 1835 that Lord Selkirk's heirs determined to give up their control of the Red River colony, and to surrender the territories granted in 1811. The expenses incurred by the Earl in his expeditions, and in his costly law suits, were estimated at a large amount, and this the Company agreed to assume.

In 1839 a powerful blow was dealt at the prosperity of the Company by the successful substitution of silk for beaver fur in the manufacture of hats. The price of beaver almost instantly fell, and continued to fall thenceforward for many years, inflicting great loss upon the Company which was fortunately atoned for in other directions.

In this same year the Company, at the suggestion of Chief Factor McLaughlin, demanded and obtained of the Russian Fur Company a ten years' lease for trading purposes of a strip of land ten leagues wide, extending north from latitude 50° 40′, and lying between British territory and the ocean, paying therefor two thousand east side land otter, worth thirty-two shillings and sixpence each. Statesmen in England marvelled at this arrangement, wondering why the Company sought these ten leagues of Russian seaboard. But traffic with the natives was only one of the objects of the Company, for they also contemplated making a customer of the Russians for European goods, as well as for those products of the soil which the inclemency of the more northern regions prevented their rivals from raising.

Acting upon this arrangement, a party was organized at Montreal in 1839 to take possession of the leased territory. They set out from York Factory in July, and travelled from

thence by way of Edmonton, Jasper House and Walla Walla to Fort Vancouver. In the following year they proceeded to the Redoubt St. Dionysius, or as it was thereafter called, Fort Stickine, the Russian post at the mouth of the Stickine River, which was to be the British headquarters in the leased territory. In charge of the fort they found a Russian officer with fifty men, guarded by a brig of thirty-two guns. The officer was informed by the Company's pioneers that they would remain with eighteen men, at which the Russians expressed astonishment. They informed young McLaughlin and W. G. Rae, who had been appointed to the new post, that the savages were troublesome, that the chief had many slaves skilled in assassination and accustomed to obey his murderous orders. To which the Company's men replied, "Other forts we rule with twenty men, and we will hold Stickine."

To this period belong the adventures and the tragic end of Thomas Simpson, the Arctic explorer. As a youth, Simpson had shown great scholastic promise, and seemed destined for medicine, when fortune tempted him to try the service of the Company. His cousin, George Simpson, was then Governor of the Company's territories, and repeated offers of a position decided the brilliant student to embark in the fur-trade. He began work as secretary to Governor Simpson, with whom he travelled from post to post for some time, until he settled down as accountant at Fort Garry. But soon the Company had a duty for him to perform. In order to strengthen their hand when applying for a renewal of their general trading license, the Honourable Adventurers decided to spend some money in exploring the Arctic coast. Young Simpson was requested to undertake this arduous task. Exploration from the Atlantic showed a defined coast line to within seven degrees of the Great Fish River, and it was to devolve upon Simpson to explore the intervening gap. The important duty was laid upon him of completing the discovery of the northern coast of North America, and in accomplishing this it was thought that the long-looked for North-West passage would be brought to light. Simpson set out from Fort Garry in the winter of 1836-37 and

travelled on foot the whole distance to Lake Athabasca, a matter of one thousand two hundred miles, where he encountered Dease, the chief factor, who was nominally at the head of the expedition. In the spring the party descended the Mackenzie in open boats, coasting along to the westward until they attained the farthest point attained by Franklin. From here a successful journey was made to within a short distance of Point Barrow, when their progress was arrested by the



THOMAS SIMPSON.

ice. After wintering at Great Bear Lake, in the spring of 1838 the expedition again started for the coast, crossing the Coppermine River and descending that stream to its mouth. But to their great disappointment they found the coast ice-bound. In the following spring they were more fortunate, finding the sea comparatively open, and as before, Simpson struck off along the coast on foot. The expedition returned

by way of the Coppermine and Great Bear Lake to the Mackenzie River, and here Simpson wrote a narrative of the expedition while waiting for the freezing up of that stream. He departed from Fort Simpson on the 2nd December, and reached Fort Garry on 1st of February, covering a distance of one thousand nine hundred and ten miles in sixty-one days, many of which were spent in enforced delays at the Company's forts on the way. Simpson was greatly disappointed to find on his arrival at Red River no letters from the Company in London, inasmuch as he had offered to make another expedition to complete the seven degrees still remaining of unexplored coast. The Company had accepted his offer, and wrote to that effect, but the letter arrived too late. The same mail also contained the news that the Royal Geographical Society, in view of the success which had attended his first expedition, had awarded him its gold medal ; while the British Government had bestowed on him a pension of £100 sterling per annum. Simpson's later discoveries far excelled those he had made in 1837, and no doubt the honours accorded him would have been very great ; but in 1840, while travelling, about three days' journey from Fort Garry, in what is now Dakota, a tragedy took place, the details of which are still wrapt in mystery. It appears that the party of which Simpson was a member were arranging their camp for the night. Their horses were grazing hard by. All were armed with guns and pistols, for the Sioux were on the warpath. One of the party was helping to pitch the tent when he heard the report of a gun. On turning around he beheld Simpson in the act of shooting, first, John Bird and then Antoine Legros, the former of whom fell dead, while the latter had time to give his son a last embrace. According to this witness, Simpson then spoke for the first time, demanding if he knew of any plot to rob him of his papers. This was the last seen alive of the Arctic explorer ; next morning his dead body was found lying beside the others he had slain. There is little doubt that he was the victim of a fit of insanity, superinduced by the fear that one of his fellow-travellers might report the results of the expedition to the Company in England before him. His death

removed an able and distinguished explorer, who rendered good service to the Company.

In 1842 Lord Ashburton arrived in the United States, equipped with instructions and powers for the settlement of certain questions long pending between Britain and America. It was expected that the Oregon boundary matter would be one of these, but this was not the case.*

Meanwhile the utmost excitement prevailed in Oregon, the settlers of both nationalities claiming possession. Political meetings were held on the part of the British, at which old Hudson's Bay Company servants and ignorant voyageurs were nominated for office, the latter men, "whose ideas of government," says McKay, "were little above those of a grisly bear."

Travelling along the middle Columbia at this time was by no means devoid of danger, owing to the animosity of the natives towards the Americans. Their faith in the Company remained unshaken; but they were subject to fits of suspicion and ill-temper, which were occasionally fraught with considerable inconvenience for the Hudson's Bay servants. In 1844, when J. W. McKay first came to Fort Vancouver, he found that many of the Indians along the route were not to be trusted. Early in 1846 McKay was dispatched to California to ascertain what arrangements might be made for securing certain supplies nearer than England, in case the Company's farming establishment on the Columbia should be surrendered to the United States.

In 1846 Joseph McKay was given the general supervision of the Pacific establishments, in succession to James Douglas. Taking passage northward in the *Beaver* in October, according to the custom of the general agent, he visited the several stations and made such changes and left such instructions as he deemed advisable. The Russians he found "affable and

* Indeed it cannot be doubted that Great Britain was wholly influenced by the position of the Company. It has been said that she did not anticipate any permanent possession of the country. "The British have certainly no other immediate object," wrote Mr. Gallatin, the American commissioner, to Henry Clay, "than that of protecting the Company in its fur-trade."

polite, but tricky." In August, 1847, he mentions meeting a chief of the Stickine Indians, whom he had reason to believe perfectly trustworthy. "He told me that he had been approached by a Russian officer with presents of beads and tobacco, and that he was told that if he would get up a war with the English in that vicinity and compel them to withdraw, he should receive assistance in the shape of arms and ammunition; and in case of success he would receive a medal from the Russian Emperor, a splendid uniform, and anything else he might desire, while his people should always be paid the highest prices for their peltries."

In the East as in the West, at Red River, at Edmonton, and on the Pacific, the old policy of procuring provisions and the necessaries of life from England had been abandoned. The Company now raised horses, horned cattle, sheep, and other farm stock. It owned large farms in different parts of the country, grist mills, saw mills, tanneries, fisheries, etc. From its posts on the Pacific it exported flour, grain, beef, pork, and butter, to the Russian settlements; lumber and fish to the Sandwich Islands; hides and wool to England. It opened the coal mines at Nanaimo, after an unremunerative expenditure of £25,000 in seeking coal at Fort Rupert.

Agricultural and mercantile enterprise.

On the Pacific Coast, as many of the Company's men who could be spared from the business of the fort, as well as such natives as had a leaning towards civilization, were employed in clearing lands and establishing farms. It was not difficult to convince these Indians that they were pursuing the best policy, and they set to with a will to help the white men and half-breeds, "becoming good bullock-drivers and better ploughmen than the Canadians or Ranakes," to whom, nevertheless, they gave freely of their women as wives, a circumstance which tended to promote good behaviour amongst the medley throng of Company's servants. Such natives were treated with all fairness, and paid wages as high as the other labourers, usually from £17 to £25 per annum.

The Company became banker for the thousands who thrived by hunting, trading, tilling or mining, within its

domains. It issued notes, and so valid were they that it has been said "the Hudson's Bay Company's note was taken everywhere over the northern continent when the 'shin



HUDSON'S BAY CO., TRADE TOKENS.

plasters' of banks in the United States and Canada were refused."*

* Sir Edward Walkin tells how, when he was for a short time, in 1865 and 1866, shareholders' auditor of the Company, he cancelled many of these notes which had become defaced, mainly owing to the fingering of Indians and others, who had left behind on the thick yellow paper, coatings of pemmican.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1846–1863.

The Oregon Treaty—Boundary Question Settled—Company Proposes Undertaking Colonization of North America—Enmity and Jealousy Aroused—Attitude of Earl Grey—Lord Elgin's Opinion of the Company—Amended Proposal for Colonization Submitted—Opposition of Mr. Gladstone—Grant of Vancouver Island Secured, but Allowed to Expire in 1859—Dr. Rae's Expedition—The Franklin Expedition and its Fate—Discovery of the North-West Passage—Imperial Parliament Appoints Select Committee—Toronto Board of Trade Petitions Legislative Council—Trouble with Indians—Question of Buying Out the Company—British Government Refuses Help—"Pacific Scheme" Promoters Meet Company in Official Interview—International Financial Association Buys Company's Rights—Edward Ellice, the "Old Bear."

On the 15th of June, 1846, the famous "Oregon Treaty" was concluded between Great Britain and America.

By the second article of that instrument it is declared that: "From the point at which the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude shall be found to intersect the great northern branch of the Columbia River, the navigation of the said branch of the river to the point where the said branch meets the main stream of the said river shall be free and open to the Hudson's Bay Company, and to all British subjects trading with the same, and thence down the said main stream to the ocean, with free access into and through the said river or rivers, it being understood that all the usual portages along the line thus described shall, in like manner, be free and open. In navigating the said river or rivers, British subjects, with their goods and produce, shall be treated on the same footing as citizens of the United States; it being, however, always understood that nothing in this article shall be construed as preventing, or intending to prevent, the Government of the United States from making any regulations respecting the navigation of the said river or rivers not inconsistent with the present treaty."

The Oregon Boundary Question.



HUDSON'S BAY CO.'S EMPLOYEES ON THEIR ANNUAL EXPEDITION.
(From "Picturesque Canada," by permission.)

According to Article III, "In the future appropriation of the territory south of the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, as provided in the first article of this treaty, the possessary rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, and of all British subjects who may be already in the occupation of land or other property lawfully acquired within the said territory, shall be respected."

The Oregon boundary question was thus settled. Immigrants were pouring into Oregon from all parts of America, and California was already receiving numerous gold miners. It was therefore natural that Vancouver Island and British Columbia should receive attention. The climate was known to be almost perfect, and a motion to encourage colonization in those territories was made in the British Parliament. But the Company was quite alive to the situation. A letter was addressed to Earl Grey, the Colonial Secretary, dwelling on the efforts the Adventurers had made in the British interest, and urging that Vancouver Island be granted to them.

The negotiations continued until March, 1847, when Sir J. H. Pelly, the Governor of the Company, again wrote to Earl Grey, informing him that the Company would "undertake the government and colonization of all the territories belonging to the Crown in North America, and receive a grant accordingly." Such a proposition staggered Her Majesty's Ministers, who were for the most part ignorant of the work the Company had already accomplished, of the position it occupied, or of the growth of its establishment on the Pacific. Already it governed and was now busy colonizing the territory, doing both in a manner superior to that adopted by the Americans in their adjacent territories. Such a proposition, too, awakened all the jealousy and enmity against the Company which had been latent for so long.

Enmity and jealousy aroused.

One of the most determined and virulent in his attacks on the Company at this time was one A. K. Isbister, who addressed a long communication to Earl Grey, besides other letters to public men in England. In answer to Mr. Isbister, Earl Grey forwarded the substance of a report which had been made by

Major Griffiths, late in command of Her Majesty's troops at Fort Garry, to whom had been communicated the petition of certain residents of Red River settlement.

To all the petitions, memorials, and complaints of interested parties and self-seekers against the Company, Earl Grey had but one answer. He said he had gone to the bottom of the matter, and he believed the Company was honest and capable. If he had had any doubt about it, this doubt must have been removed by a remarkable despatch of Lord Elgin, Governor-General of Canada, under date of 6th June, 1848. "I am bound to state," he wrote, "that the result of the enquiries which I have hitherto made is highly favourable to the Company, and that it has left on my mind the impression that the authority which it exercises over the vast and inhospitable region subject to its jurisdiction, is, on the whole, very advantageous to the Indians. . . . More especially it would appear to be a settled principle of their policy to discountenance the use of ardent spirits. It is indeed possible that the progress of the Indians toward civilization may not correspond with the expectations of some of those who are interested in their welfare. But disappointments of this nature are experienced, I fear, in other quarters as well as in the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company; and persons to whom the trading privileges of the Company are obnoxious may be tempted to ascribe to its rule the existence of evils which are altogether beyond its power to remedy. There is too much reason to fear that if the trade were thrown open and the Indians left to the mercy of the adventurers who might chance to engage in it, their condition would be greatly deteriorated."*

* Lord Elgin went on to say: "At the same time I think it is to be regretted that a jurisdiction so extensive and peculiar, exercised by British subjects at such a distance and so far beyond the control of public opinion, should be so entirely removed from the surveillance of Her Majesty's Government. The evil arising from this state of things is forcibly illustrated in the present instance by the difficulty which I experience in obtaining materials for a full and satisfactory report on the charges which your Lordship referred to me. It were very desirable, if abuses do exist, that Government possessed the means of probing them to the bottom; and on the other hand it seems to be hard on the Company, if the

Such was the opinion of the Earl of Elgin on the Hudson's Bay Company, and it was the opinion of all who really understood the Company's aims, its history and its position. "Persons to whom the trading privileges of the Company are obnoxious." It was thus that the Earl laid his finger upon the cause of the whole onslaught. Jealousy of the Company's rights was at the bottom of the whole matter.

The Vancouver Island negotiations were suspended for a year, and then the Company, seeing the opposition it had evoked, put forward a less extensive proposal, by which it offered to continue the general management of the whole territory north of the forty-ninth degree, and for colonizing purposes to except Vancouver Island alone. It agreed to colonize the island without any pecuniary advantage accruing to itself, and promised that all moneys received for lands and minerals should be applied to purposes connected with the improvement of the country. The proposition seemed a reasonable one; but in a certain rising statesman, who had inherited his opposition to the Company from his father, and who had many followers, the Honourable Adventurers had a powerful enemy. His name was Mr. W. E. Gladstone, and his enmity to the measure caused the Government to halt.

Opposition of Mr. Gladstone.

The Company was not without strong friends, as well as enemies. It drew up a deed of charter, and boldly relied on the Earl of Lincoln (afterwards Duke of Newcastle) to procure favour for it in the House of Commons. On the 17th July the Earl opened the subject, and drew from Mr. Gladstone a speech which occupies many columns of Hansard's Debates. With mighty energy he hurled argument, invective, appeal and remonstrance at the heads of his fellow-members. It was even suggested that he was

imputations cast upon it be unfounded, that Government, which undertakes the investigation, should not have the power of acquitting it on testimony more unexceptionable than any which is at present procurable. It has been stated to me that your Lordship has it in contemplation to establish a military officer at some point within the territories of the Company, and that the Company is disposed to afford every facility for carrying out this arrangement. I trust that this report may prove to be well founded."

actuated by personal malice. Every statement, every slander that could wither or blacken the fair fame of a corporation which had deserved well of its country, was employed on this occasion, and his conclusion was that the Company was incompetent to carry out its promises. Mr. Howard, who followed, believed that it would be "most unwise to confer the extensive powers proposed on a fur-trading Company." Yet he did not deny that as California had recently been ceded to America, it was a matter of the highest importance that a flourishing British Colony should be established on the Pacific Coast as an offset to that power. Lord John Russell undertook to enlighten the House as to the achievements of the Company, apart from fur-trading. He said that it already held exclusive privileges, which did not expire until 1859; that the western lands were controlled by a Crown grant, dated 13th May, 1838, confirming the possession by the Company for twenty-one years from that date; that these privileges "could not be taken away from it without breach of principle and that if colonization were delayed until the expiration of this term squatters from America might step in and possess themselves of the Island."

The grant of Vancouver Island.

It was voted to refer the matter to the Privy Council Committee for Trade and Plantations; and on the 4th September this body reported in favour of granting Vancouver Island to the Hudson's Bay Company. The grant was duly signed, sealed and delivered on the 13th January, 1849.

The Company, in the midst of its triumph, was not satisfied. It had aroused enmities which it was powerless to allay. It had been lured, by too zealous friends, into making promise of a policy which it foresaw could not be followed without ruinous cost. It also foresaw that the rush to the Pacific, consequent upon the gold-fever of 1849, would bring about new interests not its own and, in brief, that the colony would pass from its hands, and that all its outlay and labour would have been expended without profits. What it anticipated came about sooner than it expected. Opposition had been collecting from without, and had been engendered from within.

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Sir George Simpson Receiving a Deputation of Indians.

Some of the Adventurers announced that when, in 1859, the grant would expire, they would object to its renewal. The Company's enemies asserted that it had not exerted itself to bring about the desired colonization of Vancouver Island. The settlers forwarded a memorial asking to be relieved from the Company's control. At the same time, the Governor it had appointed, Mr. Douglas (afterwards Sir James Douglas), was popular, and when the grant was allowed to expire and Vancouver Island became a Crown colony in 1859, he was retained in the same office. Soon afterwards, a Government was organized, with Mr. Douglas at its head, on the mainland of British Columbia.

Meanwhile, in the eastern as well as the western extremity of the Company's domains, agitation and malcontent was being fomented. Certain residents of Red River settlement had forwarded petitions to Earl Grey. Lieutenant-Colonel Crofton, in command of Her Majesty's troops at Fort Garry, was asked to send in a report of the state of affairs at Red River. At a little later period his successor, Major Griffiths, was requested to do the same. Neither had any connection with the Company, and both might therefore be regarded as unbiassed as well as fully informed. Both exonerated the Company from most of the charges brought against them, and as to the remainder, which were preferred on untrustworthy evidence, they professed ignorance. They rendered full credit to the Company "for the manner in which it has of late years exercised its powers."

In the year of the Oregon treaty the Company caused some valuable exploration to be made of its northern coasts. Dr. Rae and his party reached Chesterfield Inlet 13th July, 1846, passed Repulse Bay safely, and conveyed their boats thence into Committee Bay, at the bottom of Boothia Gulf. The Company's expedition wintered at Repulse Bay, and again entering Committee Bay, in April, 1847, by the following month had completed a survey, with the exception of Fury and Hecla Straits, of the entire northern coast of the North American continent.

Fate of the Franklin Expedition.

In the previous year, 1845, Sir John Franklin, who had, since his last travels in Rupert's Land, been Governor of Tasmania, was offered the command of another expedition in search of the north-west passage by the British Government. He embarked in the *Erebus* and *Terror*, and his ships were last seen on the 26th of July in Baffin's Bay by a whaler.

Several years passed without tidings of the expedition. In 1850 traces of the missing ships were discovered by Ommaney and Penny, and it was thus ascertained that the first winter had been spent behind Beechy Island. No further news came until the spring of 1854, when an expedition of the Hudson's Bay Company, under Dr. Rae, from Republic Bay, received information from the Esquimaux that four years before about forty white men had been seen dragging a boat over the ice near the north shore of King William's Island. Somewhat later in the same season of 1850, declared the natives, the bodies of the entire party were found at a point a short distance to the north-west of the Great Fish River. To prove their assertion the Esquimaux produced various articles which were known to have belonged to the ill-fated explorer and his party. The Government having previously offered a reward of £10,000 "to any party, or parties who, in the judgment of the Board of Admiralty, shall, by virtue of his or her efforts, first succeed in ascertaining" the fate of the missing expedition, Dr. Rae laid claim to and obtained this reward. Another expedition under Anderson and Stewart went in two canoes, in 1855, down the Great Fish River, and further verified the truth by securing more European articles and clothing from the Esquimaux. It now became clear that a party from the *Erebus* and *Terror* had sought to reach, by the Fish River route, the nearest Company's post to the south, and had been arrested by the ice in the channel near that river's mouth. In 1857 Lady Franklin, whose efforts to set at rest the fate of her husband had been most heroic, sent out the yacht *Fox*, commanded by Captain (afterwards Sir Leopold) McClintock, who had already taken part in three expeditions despatched in search of Franklin. In the follow-



OPENING OF CAIRN ON POINT VICTORY WHICH CONTAINED THE RECORD OF THE FRANKLIN EXPEDITION.

ing year more relics were obtained, closely followed by the discovery of many skeletons. In a cairn at Point Victory Lieutenant Hobson unearthed the celebrated record kept by two of the explorers, which briefly told the history of the expedition for three years, or up to April 25, 1848. It appeared that Sir John Franklin had perished on the 11th of June, 1847. It is believed that one of the vessels must have been crushed in the ice and the other stranded on the shore of King William's Island, where it lay for years, a mine of wonderful implements and playthings for the Esquimaux.



DISCOVERY OF RELICS OF FRANKLIN EXPEDITION.

Franklin was virtually the discoverer of the long-sought north-west passage, inasmuch as he had all but traversed the entire distance between Baffin's Bay and Bering's Strait.

The North-West Passage discovered at last.

Yet it should be observed that in 1853 Commander McClure, who was in charge of an Arctic expedition from the Pacific, was rescued near Melville Island by Sir Edward Belcher, who came from the side of the Atlantic, and both he and his ship's company returned to Europe *via* Baffin's Bay. Thus the secret of the north-west passage was disclosed at last. It was now known that a continuous passage by water existed between Baffin's Bay and Bering's Strait, and that was the last of the voyages undertaken for the purpose through Rupert's Land.

For ten years past the profits of the Company had already increased. In 1846, there were in its employ five hundred and thirteen articled men and thirty-five officers. It controlled a net-work of trading routes between its posts situated between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. In 1856 it had one hundred and fifty-two establishments under Governor Simpson's control, with sixteen chief factors and twenty-nine chief traders, assisted by five surgeons, eighty-seven clerks, sixty-seven postmasters, five hundred voyageurs and one thousand two hundred permanent servants, in addition to sailors on sea-going ships and other employees, numbering altogether above three thousand men.

Imperial Parliament appoints Select Committee.

At the beginning of 1857 the opponents of the Company were on the *qui vive.* They had at last succeeded in procuring a Select Committee of the Imperial House of Commons for the purpose of considering "the state of those British possessions in North America which are under the administration of the Hudson's Bay Company, or over which it possesses a license to trade." The committee was composed of the following persons: The Right Honourable Henry Labouchere (afterwards Lord Taunton), Sir John Pakingham, Lord John Russell, Mr. Gladstone, the Right Honourable Edward Ellice, Lord Stanley, Viscount Sandon, and Messrs. Lowe, Adderley, Roebuck, Grogan, Kinnaird, Blackburn, Charles Fitzwilliam, Gordon, Gurney, Bell and Percy Herbert. Evidence was taken from the 20th of February to the 9th of March, which comprised the first session of the committee. It sat again in May, and the examination of the numerous witnesses ended on the 23rd of June. Public interest was aroused, and the Company and its doings again became a standing topic at London dinner-tables. The Honourable Adventurers were again on their trial—would they come out of the ordeal as triumphantly as on the occasion of the previous great investigation a full century and a decade before? The list of witnesses comprised some of the best known names of the day. There were: Sir John Richardson, Rear Admiral Sir

George Back, Dr. Rae, Chief Justice Draper of Canada, Sir George Simpson, Hon. John Ross, Lieut.-Colonel Lefroy, Lieut.-Colonel Caldwell, Bishop Anderson, Hon. Charles Fitzwilliam, Dr. King and Right Hon. Edward Ellice. At the second session Messrs. Gordon, Bell and Adderley retired, and Viscount Goderich, and Messrs. Matheson and Christy took their places. The first witness examined was the Honourable John Ross, then President of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada. "It is complained," said he, "that the Hudson's Bay Company occupy that territory and prevent the extension of settlement and civilization in that part of the continent. I do not think they ought to be permitted to do that; but I think it would be a very great calamity if their control and power were entirely to cease. My reason for forming that opinion is this: during all the time that I have been able to observe their proceedings, there has been peace within the whole territory. The operations of the Company seem to have been carried on, at all events, in such a way as to prevent the Indian tribes within their borders from molesting the Canadian frontier; while, on the other hand, those who have turned their attention to that quarter of the world must have seen that, from Oregon to Florida, for these last thirty years or more, there has been a constant Indian war going on between the natives of American territory, on the one side, and the Indian tribes on the other. Now, I very much fear that if the occupation of the Hudson's Bay Company were to cease, our fate in Canada might be just what it is with Americans in the border settlements of their territory."

Lord Elgin had showed the weak spot of the opposition. Mr. Ross indicated it more precisely. "I believe," said he, "there are certain gentlemen at Toronto very anxious to get up a second North-West company, and I daresay it would result in something like the same difficulties which the last North-West company created. I should be sorry to see them succeed. I think it would do a great deal of harm, creating further difficulties in Canada, which I do not desire to see created."

At the close of the evidence, Mr. Gladstone proposed

resolutions unfavourable to the Company, which were negatived by the casting vote of the chairman, Lord Taunton, the numbers being seven to seven. The committee agreed to their report on the 31st July. It recommended that the Red River and Saskatchewan districts might be "ceded to Canada on equitable principles," the details being left to Her Majesty's Government. The termination of the Company's rule over Vancouver Island was advised; and this advice was not distasteful to the Company. The committee strongly urged, in the interests of law and order, and of the Indian population as well as for the preservation of the fur-trade, that the Company "should continue to enjoy the privileges of exclusive trade which they now possess."

As an illustration of the spirit prevalent in many quarters in Canada towards the Company, the petition which on the 28th of April, 1857, reached the Legislative Council of Canada, may be cited. It emanated from the Board of Trade of the City of Toronto. After reciting in anything but a respectful manner the history and status of the Company, it declared that the Company acted under a "pretended" right, that it "assumed the power to enact tariffs, collect custom dues, and levy taxes against British subjects, and has enforced unjust and arbitrary laws in defiance of every principle of right and justice." The petitioners besought the attention of the Government "to that region of country designated as the chartered territory, over which the said Company exercises a sovereignty over the soil as well as a monopoly in the trade, and which said Company claims as a right that insures to it *in perpetuo*, in contradistinction to that portion of the country over which it claims an exclusive right of trade, but for a limited period only." The "gentlemen from Toronto" admitted that this latter claim was founded upon a legal right, but submitted that a renewal of "such license of exclusive trade was injurious to the interests of the country so monopolized, and in contravention of the rights of the inhabitants of Canada."

Toronto merchants petition Legislative Council.

In this year the claims of the Company in connection with the Treaty of 1846 were finally arranged by a special treaty

concluded through the Hon. W. H. Seward for America, and Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador. The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, which was an offshoot and subordinate concern of the Hudson's Bay Company, for the purposes of wheat, wool, hides and tallow production, was also named as one of the interested parties.

"Whereas," so ran the new treaty, "it is desirable that all questions between the United States authorities on the one hand, and the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies on the other, with respect to the possessary rights and claims of these companies, and of any other British subjects in Oregon and Washington Territory, should be settled by the transfer of those rights and claims to the Government of the United States for an adequate money consideration: It is hereby agreed that the United States of America and Her Britannic Majesty shall, within twelve months after the exchange of the ratification of the present treaty, appoint each a commissioner for the purpose of examining and deciding upon all claims arising out of the provisions of the above-quoted articles of the Treaty of June 15, 1846." *

The commercial rivalry existing between the Russian-American Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, which held a trading lease of part of the sea-bound territory, naturally tended to engender and keep alive an unwholesome temper amongst the Indians. They were frequently troublesome, and occasionally murderous. In May, 1862, between two hundred and fifty and three hundred of the natives on the west side of Chatham Strait, twenty-five miles north of Cross Sound, seized on the quarter-deck the captain and chief trader of the Company's steamer *Labouchere*, of seven hundred tons

* The treaty having provided for a joint commission, Mr. A. S. Johnston and the Hon. (afterwards Sir) John Rose were appointed to act for America and Great Britain, respectively. These commissioners, on the 10th of September, 1869, issued an award from Washington, directing the payment of $450,000 by the United States to the Hudson's Bay Company, and $200,000 to the Puget's Sound Company. There was, as usual, considerable delay in making this payment. On the 11th of July, 1870, $325,000 was appropriated by Congress for this purpose, and a like sum by another appropriation in the following year.

and taking possession of the vessel, drove the crew forward. But the crew had a large gun trained aft, and parleying took place. The Indians had not known that this was a Company ship. It was agreed that both parties should discharge their rifles, and peace was proclaimed, the Indians finally leaving the vessel. Before their departure, however, they covered the deck with fine sea-otter and other skins as a present to the captain and traders, and as a token of peace.

Unwholesome temper amongst the Indians.

In September, 1860, after an illness of but five days' duration, died Sir George Simpson, the Governor-in-Chief in Rupert's Land, amidst universal regrets. He had been often, indeed persistently, attacked by the Company's enemies during his tenure of his office ; indeed almost up to the day of his death he was charged with being autocratic and tyrannical, but none could deny him great ability and exceptional fitness for his post.

He had taken a powerful interest in northern discoveries, and superintended the fitting out of several Arctic expeditions. For his services in this direction he had been knighted in 1841, and soon afterwards had set out on a journey round the world, of which he published an interesting relation. In his late years he resided at Lachine, where he entertained the Prince of Wales, on his visit in 1860.

His successor was Mr. A. E. Dallas, who having made a considerable fortune in China, had for some time served the Company on the Pacific coast. Thanks to his prudence, the landing in 1859 of General Harney and a detachment of American troops on the island St. Juan, between Vancouver's Island and the mainland, had been controlled and checkmated by the proposal of joint occupation until negotiations should settle the question of right. He was returning home to England, intending to retire, when he was persuaded to accept the Governorship of Rupert's Land.

At the head of a scheme for a transcontinental road and telegraph system was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Edward Watkin, well known as the promoter of the Grand Trunk Railway. For this scheme an Imperial subsidy was sought. The dissensions which ensued between the various parties interested

Proposals to buy out the Company.

proved not unfruitful, for they led up to the great question of buying out the Company.

At the beginning, however, the Duke of Newcastle, then Colonial Secretary, had amiably undertaken to sound the Company as to their willingness to allow a road and telegraphs through their territory.*

In response to this demand the aged Governor answered, almost in terror, to the Duke of Newcastle, "What, sequester our very tap-root! Take away the fertile lands where the buffaloes feed! Let in all kinds of people to squat and settle, and frighten away the fur-bearing animals they don't hunt and kill! Impossible! Destruction—extinction of our time-honoured industry. If these gentlemen are so patriotic, why don't they buy us out?" To this outburst the Duke quietly replied: "What is your price?" Governor Berens answered: "Well, about a million and a half."

On hearing this, Mr. Watkin was anxious that the British Government should figure among the purchasing parties. Purchase seemed the only way out of the difficulty. The

* "I am glad to tell you that since I received your letter of Saturday last, the Hudson's Bay Company has replied to my communication; and has promised to *grant* land to a Company formed under such auspices as those with whom I placed them in communication. The question now is, what *breadth* of land they will give, for of course they propose to include the whole length of the line through their territory. A copy of the reply shall be sent to Mr. Baring, and I hope you and he will be able to bring this concession to some practical issue.

"I was quite aware of the willingness of the Company to *sell* their *whole* rights for some such sum as £1,500,000. I ascertained the fact two months ago and alluded to it in the House of Lords in my reply to a motion by Lord Donoughmore. I cannot, however, view the proposal in so favourable a light as you do. There would be no immediate or *direct* return to show for this large outlay, for of course the trade monopoly must cease, and the sale of the land would for some time bring in little or nothing—certainly not enough to pay for the government of the country.

"I do not think Canada *can*, or if she can, ought to take any large share in such a payment. Some of her politicians would no doubt support the proposal with views of their own—but it would be a serious, and for some time unrenumerative addition to their very embarassing debt. I certainly should not like to *sell* any portion of the territory to the United States—*exchange* (if the territory were once acquired) would be a different thing—but that would not help towards the liquidation of the purchase money."—*Letter of the Duke of Newcastle, 14th August, 1862.*

Governor and Company seemed to have made up their minds for a sale or else to withstand the project which Mr. Watkin and the rest had so dearly at heart. An endeavour was made to convince the Duke that at the price named there could be no risk of loss, because the fur-trade could be separated from the land and rights, and after the purchase a new joint-stock company could be organized to take over the trading-posts, the fleet of ships, the stock of goods, and the other assets, rights and privileges affecting trade. Such a company, it was figured, would pay a rental (redeemable over a term of years if necessary) of three or three and one-half per cent. on £800,000, leaving only £700,000 as the value of a territory bigger than Russia in Europe. Such a company would have to raise additional capital of its own to modernise its business, to improve the means of intercourse between its posts, and to cheapen and expedite the transport to and fro of its merchandise. It was pointed out that a land company could be organized in England, Canada and America which, on a similar principle of redemption rental, might take over the lands, leaving a reserve of probably a fourth of the whole as the unpaid-for property of the Government, at the price of £700,000. "Were these proposals to succeed, then," said Mr. Watkin, "all the country would have to do was to lend £1,000,000 on such security as could be offered, ample in each case," in his opinion. But a condition was to be imposed if these plans were to be adopted. The Hudson's Bay territory must be erected into a Crown colony like British Columbia, and governed on the responsibility of the Empire. As to the cost of government, there were three suggestions put forward. One was that it might be recouped by a moderate system of duties in and out of the territory, to be agreed upon between Canada and British Columbia on the one hand, and the United States on the other. The second was to sell a portion of the territory to America for five million dollars, which sum Mr. Watkin knew could be obtained. The third scheme was to open up portions of the fertile belt to colonization from the United

Discussions as to the price.

States. When considering the second plan, the Duke said he would not sell; he would exchange; and studying the map, "we put our fingers upon the Aroostook Wedge, in the State of Maine; upon a piece of territory at the head of Lake Superior, and upon islands between British Columbia and Vancouver's Island, which might be the equivalent of rectification of boundary on many portions of the westward along the 49th parallel of latitude."

As for a name for the new proposed Crown colony, Dr. Mackay had suggested to Mr. Watkin, "Hysperia," and this name was mentioned to the Duke. Its similarity to "hysteria" probably caused it to be dismissed.

Opposition of the Colonial Office.

The decision of the Duke of Newcastle on the whole proposition was that were he a Minister of Russia he would agree to purchase the land from the Hudson's Bay Company. "It is," said he, "the right thing to do for many, for all reasons; but ministers here must subordinate their views to the Cabinet." Nevertheless, he went so far as to believe that it was right. But the Colonial Office were in positive opposition to the scheme.

It was now clear that the promoters of the Pacific transcontinental railway could hope for no direct pecuniary aid from the British Government. They must act for themselves.

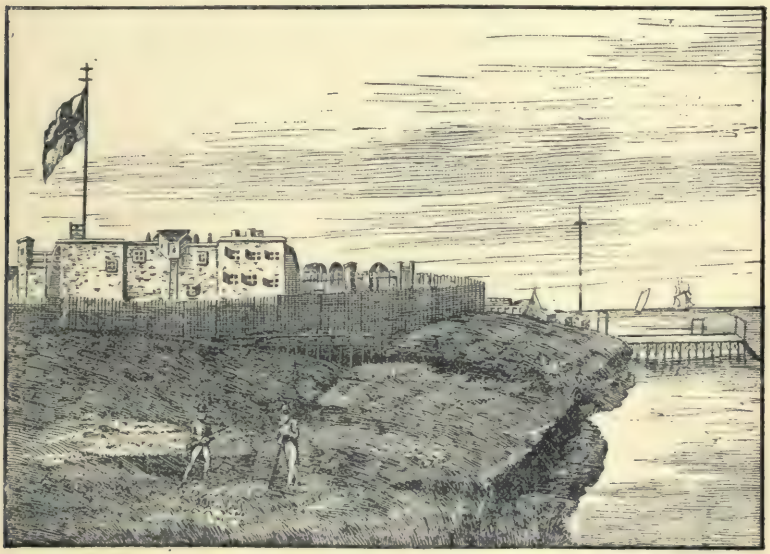
After some correspondence, it was arranged that the promoters of the "Pacific scheme," as it was called, should meet the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company in an official interview. The date was the 1st of December, 1862.

"The room," writes Sir Edward Watkin in his Memoirs, "was the Court room, dark and dirty. A faded green cloth, old chairs, almost black, and a fine portrait of Prince Rupert. We met the Governor, Berens, Eden Colville and Lyell only. On our part there were Mr. G. G. Glyn (the late Lord Wolverton), Captain Glyn (the late Admiral Henry Glyn), and Messrs. Newmarch, Benson, Blake and myself. Mr. Berens, an old man and obstinate, bearing a name to be found in the earliest lists of Hudson's Bay shareholders, was

somewhat insulting in his manner. We took it patiently. He seemed to be astounded at our assurance. 'What! interfere with his fertile belt, tap-root,' etc."

But the Governor showed himself more reasonable; a calmer discussion ensued, and the promoters were informed that the Company would be ready to make a grant of land for the actual site of a road and telegraph through their territory. Nothing more would be vouchsafed, unless, as they

The "Pacific Scheme" discussed.



FORT PRINCE OF WALES.
(Drawn from an old print.)

had informed the Duke of Newcastle, they were paid for all their rights and property.

"The offer," observes Sir Edward, "of a mere site of a road and ground for telegraph poles was no use. So, just as we were leaving, I said, 'We are quite ready to consider your offer to sell; and to expedite matters, will you allow us to see your accounts, charters, etc.' They promised to consult their Court."

The result of this promise was that the promoters were put into communication with "old Mr. Roberts, aged eighty-

five, their accountant, and with their solicitor, Mr. Maynard." Many interviews took place at Hudson's Bay House between these parties. On the 17th of March, 1863, Mr. Watkin met the Governor, Mr. Ellice, junior (son of Edward Ellice, who had been nick-named the "Old Bear"), Mr. Matheson and Mr. Maynard, at Hudson's Bay House. A number of account books were produced.

"Next day I had a long private interview with Mr. Maynard, but could not see the balance-sheet. The same day, I saw the Duke with Messrs. Glyn and Benson." On the following day, the chief promoter spent the forenoon with Mr. Roberts, the accountant, and his son and assistant, at Hudson's Bay House.

"Mr. Roberts told him many odd things," he says; "one was, that the Company had had a freehold farm on the site of the present City of San Francisco of one thousand acres, and had sold it just before the gold discoveries for £1,000, because two factors quarrelled over it. I learnt a great deal of the inside of the affair, and got some glimpses of the competing North-West Company, amalgamated by Mr. Edward Ellice, its chief mover, many years agone, with the Hudson's Bay Company. Pointing to some boxes in his private room one day, Mr. Maynard said, 'There are years of Chancery in those boxes, if anyone else had them.' And he more than once quoted a phrase of the Old Bear, 'My fortune came late in life.'"

The International Financial Association.

In spite of the Duke's indisposition, he expressed the greatest interest in the progress of the negotiations. Yet the prospect of Government aid was now remote. Two ways were open to raise the money for a purchase of the Company's rights—to secure the names and support of fifteen persons, millionaires, for £100,000 each; the other to hand the proposed purchase over to the newly-organized International Finance Association, who were eager to find some important enterprise to put before the public. The first method seemed to recommend itself to the promoters; and the friends of the project could easily have underwritten the necessary

amount. But the Company now announced that it would give no credit. "We must take up the shares as presented and pay for them over the counter." There was, therefore, no alternative. Mr. Richard Potter, acting for the capitalists, completed the negotiations. The shares were taken over and paid for by the International Financial Association, who issued new stock to the public to an amount which covered a large provision of new capital for the extension of business by the Company, and at great profit to themselves. As regards the new Hudson's Bay shareholders, their two hundred and one shares were subsequently reduced by returns of capital to one hundred and thirty-one, and having attained a value of thirty-seven, during the "land boom" period twenty years later stood at two hundred and forty-one.

A Hudson's Bay Company prospectus was issued. It was understood that the International Financial Association were merely agents, that the shares would not remain in their hands, but would pass to the proprietors, who would, of course, only enjoy the rights such shares carried. They would, in fact, be a continuation of the Company, only their efforts would be directed to the promotion of the settlement of the country; the development of the postal and transit communications being one of the objects to which they were pledged. A new council had been formed, and amongst its members was Mr. Eden Colville, one of the old committee, whom the Duke praised publiclyin the highest terms, as a "man of business and good esnse."

There was one man in London who was astonished at what had taken place. Edward Ellice still lived, but his commanding figure was bent by the weight of years. As we have seen, it was he who, in 1821, played the principal part in the amalgamation of the rival companies. He had grown to be proud of the Company, proud of its history, of its traditions, of its service; and he seemed to detect in this transfer, its fall. A few months before his death, in 1863, he met one of the negotiators at Burlington House. He confronted him for some moments without speaking, in a state of abstraction. Then he passed on, like a man "endeavouring to recollect a long

history of difficulty, and to realize how strangely it had all ended."

Ellice had said, before the Parliamentary Committee of 1857, in reply to a question put by a member as to what probability there was of a settlement being made, "within what you consider to be the southern territories of the Hudson's Bay Company?" "None; in the lifetime of the youngest man now alive!"



CHAPTER XXXV.

1863–1871.

Indignation of the Wintering Partners—Distrust and Misgivings Arise—Proposals of Governor Dallas for the Compensation of the Wintering Partners in Exchange for their Abrogation of Deed Poll—Threatened Deadlock—Position of those in Authority Rendered Untenable—Failure of Duke of Newcastle's Proposals for Surrender of Territorial Rights—The Russo-American Alaskan Treaty—The Hon. W. McDougall's Resolutions—Deputation Goes to England—Sir Stafford Northcote becomes Governor—Opinion of Lord Granville as to the Position of Affairs—Lack of Military System Company's Weakness—Cession now Inevitable—Terms Suggested by Lord Granville Accepted—First Riel Rebellion—Wolseley at Fort Garry.

All this had taken place in London. The sale had been negotiated between financiers. Not a word of what was impending had crossed the Atlantic to the hunting-grounds of the North-West—to the body of men who were, as much as the Governor, the Committee and the sleeping partners, members of the Great Company. Yet their voice had never been heard, nor their consent to the transaction obtained. By the Deed Poll it was provided that the profits of the fur-trade (less interest on capital employed) were to be divided into one hundred parts, sixty parts going to the stockholders and forty to the "wintering partners." What would the "wintering partners" say to this brilliant "game of chess" which had been played with the stockholders for interests which were jointly theirs?

Indignation of the Wintering Partners.

No sooner had the papers been signed, and the million and a half sterling paid over, than misgivings seem to have seized the minds of those directly interested. Yet, on their behalf, it was urged that the Company's posts and hunting grounds still remained. That the factors and traders would be as well off under the new *régime* as the old —that the mere change of one body of shareholders for

another could affect them nothing—that, in fact, they would really benefit by having men of newer ideas and a more progressive spirit.

The news, once in the newspapers, travelled fast, and in a few weeks at the less distant posts, and in a few months at the more remote ones, the rumour ran that the Company had sold out—that the London partners had betrayed the real workers in the wilderness.



FORT GARRY.

A large number of the Company's chief factors and traders had, it appeared, addressed a memorial to the Company in London, when first the rumour of a sale had reached them. They declared that they had been informed that no transfer was probable, but if it took place it would not be without previous consultation. They now learned for the first time from the newspapers that these arrangements had been made. An influential member of the new Company predicted that a general resignation of the officers from Labrador to Sitka would ensue, followed by a confederation amongst themselves,

in order to carry on the fur-trade in competition with the Company. They had, they said, "the skill, the will, and the capital to do it."

It was said that the appearance of Mr. Lampson's name as Deputy Governor of the new Company had heightened the first feeling of distrust, for this gentleman and his commercial connections had long been the Company's great rivals in the fur marts, carrying on a vigorous competition at all accessible points.*

Governor Dallas, almost immediately upon his arrival in Montreal, caused a circular to be issued, addressed to all the factors, completely refuting all these charges and inuendoes. Many conferences took place between Dallas and Watkin as to the working of the Company in the fur territories on the new basis. Dallas kept the Governor and Committee in London fully advised of the state of affairs, accompanied by proposals as to the compensation to be allowed the aggrieved wintering partners. An interesting object, which it was desired to accomplish at this time, was an exchange of boundary between the Company and the United States, so as to permit Superior City being brought into British territory by means of a fair payment and exchange of land. The negotiations looking to this end, although at one time promising, proved a failure.

Governor Dallas's Suggestions.

It was believed that the first measure necessary towards the re-organization of the Hudson's Bay service would be the abolition or modification of the Deed Poll, under which the trade was then conducted. The wintering partners (chief

* "To my mind the worst feature in the new Company is that of allowing a foreigner (American) to hold office. He owes allegiance to the United States, and his position gives him knowledge which no American should possess. 'Blood is thicker than water,' says the proverb: 'No man can serve two masters.' As to the idea that being in the fur-trade his experience and influence will benefit the new Company, will any furrier believe that? If the Company will sell all the furs, I would never rest satisfied while an American was in the management.'"—William McNaughten, the Company's agent at New York.

factors and chief traders) had certain vested rights, and these could not be interfered with without compensation.*

One mode suggested by Governor Dallas of removing the difficulty was to ascertain the value of a retired interest, and bestow a money compensation to each officer on his entering into an agreement to consent to the abrogation of the Deed Poll. As regarded the shares held in retirement, some of the interests had nearly run out and none of the parties had any voice in the business. The value of a (one-eighty-fifth) share was ascertained to be (on the average of the previous thirteen "outfits") about £408, at which rate a chief factor's retired interest would amount to £3,264, and a chief trader's to £1,632. Adding the customary year's furlough on retiring, a factor's retired allowance would be £4,080, and a trader's £2,040. On such a scale of commutation it would cost the Company £114,500 to buy out its officers.

As a set-off to this outlay Governor Dallas suggested a substantial reduction in salaries. Under the then existing organization the pay of officers in the service was £2,000 to the Governor-in-Chief, £16,000 amongst sixteen chief factors, £14,000 to thirty-five chief traders, and £10,000 to the clerks, a total officers' pay-roll of £38,000. He proposed to cut this down as follows:

Governor-in-Chief	£2,000
Lieutenant-Governor	1,250
Four Councillors at £800	3,200
Twenty-five chief traders at £300	7,500
One hundred clerks at various salaries	10,000
	£23,950

But Sir Edmund and his colleagues thought otherwise. The wintering partners were not yet to reap any profit from the

* The eighty-five shares belonging to the wintering partners, in 1863, were held as follows:

15	chief factors	30 shares
37	chief traders	37 "
10	retired chief factors	13 "
10	retired chief traders	5 "
		85 shares.

sale of the Company's assets. The Deed Poll remained in full force until 1871, when they were paid £107,055 out of the money received from Canada for Rupert's Land and the North-West.

In 1863 the Company's government had almost come to a deadlock in the Red River settlement. Two cases had just occurred of prisoners having been forcibly rescued from gaol; and they, with about thirty to fifty others implicated in the riots, continued at large, fostering discontent. The only paper published, the notorious *Nor'-Wester*, was in the hands of the Company's bitterest enemies.* The position of those in authority was so disagreeable that it was with great difficulty that Governor Dallas persuaded the magistrates to continue their duties. Governor McTavish, who was in charge of Assiniboine, resigned, and others were prepared to follow his example, including the Governor-in-Chief himself. Fortunately the open malcontents were few in number and the volunteer force was sufficient to protect the gaol and support law and order, were it not for the unwise zeal of the Company's partisans who were ready to engage in a free fight with the agitators. This, beyond question, would have led to a repetition of the Semple tragedy of 1816. It may be noted that the Company's unpopularity in the Red River country, according to Governor Dallas, "arose entirely from the system, not from the faults of its administrators."

Threatened Deadlock in Red River Settlement.

The agitation against the Company still continued, but slowly. It seemed difficult for the parties interested in the abolition of the Company's rights to agree upon a single scheme which would be permanently satisfactory, and not too costly. Sir Edmund Head expressed himself in favour of a complete sale of rights and ownership to the Imperial authorities. But this scheme was, as has been seen, beset with almost insuperable difficulties. In November, 1863, Sir Edmund suggested that an equal division be made of the territory fit for settlement between the Company and the

* "Its continued attacks upon the Company," wrote Governor Dallas, "find a greedy ear with the public at large, both in the settlement and in Canada."

Crown, with inclusion of specified tracts in the share of the former; secondly, that the Company construct the road and telegraph; thirdly, that the Crown purchase such of the Company's premises as should be required for military use, and to pay the Company a net third of all future revenue from gold and silver.

In his Speech from the Throne, on the 19th February, 1864, Lord Monk, the Governor-General of Canada, alluded to the matter, which was beginning to engross the public mind.

"The condition," said he, "of the vast region lying on the north-west of the settled portions of the Province is daily becoming a question of great interest. I have considered it advisable to open a correspondence with the Imperial Government, with a view to arrive at a precise definition of the geographical boundaries of Canada in that direction. Such a definition of boundary is a desirable preliminary to further proceedings with respect to the vast tracts of land in that quarter belonging to Canada, but not yet brought under the action of our political and municipal system."

It was hoped by many that the Company could be induced to sell out its rights to the Imperial Government, and out of the territory to carve out a new Crown Colony.

In the course of the ensuing debate on the address, the Honourable William McDougall, Minister of Crown Lands, who was officially concerned in the matter, stated that "the Government of Canada had reached a conclusion upon the advisability of determining whether the Red River territory belonged to Canada or to some other country." The consequence was that a correspondence had been opened with the Imperial Government upon the subject. Mr. McDougall thereupon announced his individual view of the case as being that "Canada was entitled to claim as a portion of its soil all that part of the North-West territory that could be proved to have been in possession of the French at the time of the cession of Canada to the British."

It was not at all likely that the Duke of Newcastle would share such a view, or that he would entirely acquiesce with

the suggestion of Sir Edmund Head on behalf of the Company. Under date of the 11th of March, and 5th of April, 1864, he formulated the appended proposals :—

1. The Company to surrender to the Crown its territorial rights.

2. To receive one shilling for every acre sold by the Crown but limited to £150,000 in all, and to fifty years in duration, whether or not the receipts attained that amount.

3. To receive one-fourth of any gold revenue, but limited to £100,000 in all, and to fifty years in duration.

4. To have one square mile of adjacent land for every lineal mile constructed of road and telegraph to British Columbia.

These proposals were carefully considered by Sir Edmund Head and his colleagues, and it was decided at a meeting on the 13th of April to accept them, subject to certain alterations. It was urged that the amount of payments within fifty years should either not be limited or else placed at the sum of £1,000,000 sterling, instead of a quarter of that sum. The Company also suggested that a grant be made to it of five thousand acres of wild land for every fifty thousand acres sold by the Crown.

The surrender of Territorial Rights.

In the meantime the Duke of Newcastle had been succeeded in the Colonial Secretaryship by Mr. Cardwell, who on the 6th of June wrote to say that he could not entertain the amendments of the Company. For several months nothing was done, but in December the Honourable Adventurers again met and again showed their desire for an amicable and reasonable arrangement. They offered to accept £1,000,000 for the territory which they then defined, and which was substantially in extent the whole region granted them in the Charter of Charles II. In 1865 the Hon. George Brown went to England to come to terms over the proposed transfer, but without success.

The charter of the Russian Company was about to expire. It had underlet to the Hudson's Bay Company all its franchise on the mainland between 54° 40′ and Mount St. Elias;

America purchases Alaska.

and now it was proposed that an American Company, holding direct from the Russian Government, should be substituted, and it seemed to the Americans a good opportunity to organize a fur-trading company to trade between the States and the Russian possessions in America. But before the matter could mature, the American and Russian Governments interposed with a treaty, by which Alaska was ceded to the States for $7,200,000 in gold. Few treaties have ever been carried out in so simple a manner. Russia was glad to be rid of her possessions in North America. The sum of $7,000,000 was originally agreed upon; but when it was understood that a fur company and an ice company enjoyed monopolies under the existing government, it was decided to extinguish these for the additional sum.

On 1st July, 1867, the Confederation of the scattered British Provinces of North America was made an accomplished fact, amidst general rejoicings. On the 4th of December, Mr. McDougall, who was now Minister of Public Works for the new Dominion of Canada, brought in, at the first session of Parliament, a series of resolutions directly relating to the acquisition of Rupert's Land and the Great North-West:—

1. That it would promote the prosperity of the Canadian people and conduce to the advantage of the whole Empire if the Dominion of Canada, constituted under the provisions of the British North America Act, 1867, were extended westward to the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

2. That the colonization of the lands of the Saskatchewan, Assiniboire, and Red River Settlements, the development of the mineral wealth which abounds in the regions of the North-West, and the extension of commercial intercourse through the British possessions in America from the Atlantic to the Pacific, are alike dependent upon the establishment of a stable government for maintenance of law and order in the North-West Territories.

3. That the welfare of the sparse and widely-scattered population of British subjects of European origin, already inhabiting these remote and unorganized territories, would be materially enhanced by the formation therein of political institutions bearing analogy, as far as circumstances will admit, to those which exist in the several Provinces of this Dominion.

4. That the 146th section of the British North America Act, 1867,

provides for the admission of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory, or either of them, into union with Canada upon terms and conditions to be expressed in Addresses from the Houses of Parliament of the Dominion to Her Majesty, and which shall be approved of by the Queen in Council.

5. That it is accordingly expedient to address Her Majesty, that she would be graciously pleased, by and with the advice of Her Most Honourable Privy Council, to unite Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory with the Dominion of Canada, and to grant to the Parliament of Canada authority to legislate for their future welfare and good government.

6. That in the event of the Imperial Government agreeing to transfer to Canada the jurisdiction and control over this region, it would be expedient to provide that the legal rights of any corporation, company, or individual within the same will be respected ; and that in case of difference of opinion as to the extent, nature, or value of these rights, the same shall be submitted to judicial decision, to be determined by mutual agreement between the Government of Canada and the parties interested. Such agreement to have no effect or validity until first sanctioned by the Parliament of Canada.

7. That upon the transference of the territories in question to the Canadian Government, the claims of the Indian tribes to compensation for lands required for purposes of settlement would be considered, and settled in conformity with the equitable principles which have uniformly governed the Crown in its dealings with the aborigines.

In the following year a delegation to arrange the terms for the acquisition by Canada of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory arrived in England. It consisted of Sir George Étienne Cartier and Mr. William McDougall. On presenting themselves at the Colonial Office they were invited by the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, to visit him at Stowe "for the purpose of discussing freely and fully the numerous and difficult questions involved in the transfer of these great territories to Canada." To the Duke's country-seat the delegates accordingly went. Here, one of the first things the Duke communicated to them was that the Company being lords-proprietors were to be treated as such, and not as parties having a defective title and fit subjects for that "spoliation" previously

Deputation goes to England.

deplored by Cartier.* There can be no manner of doubt that, taking this view, the Company's demands were most reasonable. But the Canadian delegates were not content to take this view. There had been so much irresponsible hue-and-cry about the weakness of the Company's title, that they doubtless felt themselves privileged to hold out for better terms. While negotiations were thus pending in London, the Duke of Buckingham quitted office with his colleagues, and was succeeded by Earl Granville. Almost at the same time the Earl of Kimberley, the Company's Governor, resigned, and was replaced by Sir Stafford Northcote. In January, 1869, the new Colonial Secretary transmitted to the delegates the reply of the Company, declining their counter-proposals, and inviting them to communicate to him any observations they might desire to offer further on the situation.

"We felt reluctant," to quote the language of the delegates, "as representatives of Canada, to engage in a controversy with the Company concerning matters of fact, as well as questions of law and policy, while the negotiation with it was being carried on by the Imperial Government in its own name and of its own authority."

Nevertheless, these scruples were soon overcome. They accepted Lord Granville's invitation, and on the 8th February stated at length their views upon the various points raised by the Governor of the Company, which views clearly demonstrated that the Dominion was by no means prepared to deal with the Honourable Adventurers in a spirit of generosity or even of equity. Lord Granville now came forward with plans of his own, but these were not agreeable to Sir George Cartier

Canada exerts pressure on the Company.

* "With regard to the Hudson's Bay matter," wrote Cartier to Watkin, under date of 15th of February, 1868, "not the least doubt that the speech of 'John A.' was very uncalled for and injudicious. He had no business to make such a speech, and I told him so at the time—that he ought not to have made it. However, you must not attach too much importance to that speech. I myself, and several of my colleagues, and John A. himself, have no intention to commit any spoliation; and for myself in particular, I can say to you that I will never consent to be a party to a measure or anything intended to be an act of spoliation of the Hudson's Bay's rights and privileges."

and Mr. McDougall. While the negotiations were in progress the Company lodged an indignant complaint against the Canadian Government for undertaking the construction of a road between the Lake of the Woods and the Red River settlement without first having procured its consent. Stormy meetings of the Honourable Adventurers were held; it seemed impossible to resist the pressure which was being brought to bear. Had the old governor and committee been in existence it is possible this pressure would have been longer withstood. The delegates returned to Canada, but they had succeeded in no slight measure in impressing upon the Imperial Government their peculiar views. On the 9th of March, Lord Granville employed the following language to the Governor of the Company:

"At present the very foundations of the Company's title are not undisputed. The boundaries of its territory are open to questions of which it is impossible to ignore the importance. Its legal rights, whatever these may be, are liable to be invaded without law by a mass of Canadian and American settlers, whose occupation of the country on any terms it will be little able to resist; while it can hardly be alleged that the terms of the charter, or its internal constitution, are such as to qualify it under all these disadvantages for maintaining order and performing the internal and external duties of government."

There was the Company's weakness. No sovereign in Europe had a clearer right to his or her dominions, perhaps no rule was wiser or more beneficent, but the one powerful, indispensable adjunct to sovereign authority it lacked—a military system.* With a standing army the Company's rights would have been secure—but it was a king without soldiers. It required ten thousand drilled men to defend its frontiers—

Lack of Military system Company's weakness.

* "The present state of government in the Red River settlement is attributable alike to the habitual attempt encouraged, perhaps very naturally, in England and in Canada, to discredit the tradition and question the title of the Hudson's Bay Company, and to the false economy which has stripped the Governor of a military force, with which, in the last resort, to support the decisions of the legal tribunals.

it was too late in the day to organize such a force, it could only submit gracefully to its envious and powerful neighbours. Cession was perhaps inevitable; the terms which Lord Granville now proposed it decided to accept.

1. The Hudson's Bay Company to surrender to Her Majesty all the rights of government, property, etc., in Rupert's Land, which are specified in 31 and 32 Victoria, clause 105, section 4; and also all similar rights in any other part of British North America, not comprised in Rupert's Land, Canada, or British Columbia.

2. Canada is to pay to the Company £300,000 when Rupert's Land is transferred to the Dominion of Canada.

3. The Company may, within twelve months of the surrender, select a block of land adjoining each of its stations, within the limits specified in Article 1.

4. The size of the blocks is not to exceed —— acres in the Red River country, nor 3,000 acres beyond that territory, and the aggregate extent of the blocks is not to exceed 50,000 acres.

5. So far as the configuration of the country admits, the blocks are to be in the shape of parallelograms, of which the length is not more than double the breadth.

6. The Hudson's Bay Company may, for fifty years after the surrender, claim in any township or district within the Fertile Belt, in which land is set out for settlement, grants of land not exceeding one-twentieth of the land so set out. The blocks so granted to be determined by lot, and the Hudson's Bay Company to pay a ratable share of the survey expenses, not exceeding —— an acre.

7. For the purpose of the present agreement, the Fertile Belt is to be bounded as follows: On the south by the United States Boundary; on the west by the Rocky Mountains; on the north by the northern branch of the Saskatchewan; on the east by Lake Winnipeg, the Lake of the Woods, and the waters connecting them.

8. All titles to land up to the 8th of March, 1869, conferred by the Company, are to be confirmed.

9. The Company to be at liberty to carry on its trade without hindrance, in its corporate capacity, and no exceptional tax is to be placed

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No other organized government of white men in the world, since William Penn, has endeavoured to rule any population, still less a promiscuous people composed of whites, half-breeds, Indians and borderers, without a soldiery of some sort, and the inevitable result of the experiment has, in this case, been an unpunished case of prison-breaking, not sympathized in, it is true, by the majority of the settlers, but still tending to bring law and government into contempt, and greatly to discourage the governing body held responsible for keeping order in the territory." —*Governor Dallas.*

on the Company's land, trade or servants, nor an import duty on goods introduced by them previous to the surrender.

10. Canada is to take over the materials of the Electric Telegraph at cost price, such price including transport, but not including interest for money, and subject to a deduction for ascertained deteriorations.

11. The Company's claim to land under agreement of Messrs. Vankoughnet and Hopkins to be withdrawn.

12. The details of this arrangement, including the filling up of the blanks in Articles 4 and 6, to be settled at once by mutual agreement.

On such terms did the Canadian Government acquire this vast territory of two million three hundred thousand square miles. In that portion designated the Fertile Belt, comprising three hundred million acres, there were agricultural lands believed to be capable of yielding support to twenty-five million people.

Cession to Canadian Government.

Filled with high hopes as to the future of the country they had thus acquired, the Canadian Government was confronted by the necessity of providing it with a suitable form of government to replace that of the Company. Little did the public men who had interested themselves in the negotiations ponder on the difficulties of the task. Apparently they undertook it with a light heart. During the session of 1869 an Act was passed at Ottawa providing a provisional form of government in the territory, and in October of the same year the Hon. William McDougall received the appointment of Lieutenant-Governor. But before he set out on his duties surveying parties had been busy in the Red River settlement, laying out townships and instituting an extended series of surveys.

In order to be in the place of his government when by the Queen's Proclamation it should become a portion of the Dominion of Canada, McDougall, in the month of November, found himself at the frontier of his Province. But the transfer was not to be consummated without bloodshed. A portion of the little community of Red River raised its voice in vehement protest against the arrangements made between the Government of Canada and the Company. These malcontents, chiefly French half-breeds, headed by

Louis Riel, expelled the Governor appointed by the Dominion and planned a resistance to all authority emanating from the same source. They assembled in large numbers, and, after fortifying portions of the road between Pembina and Fort Garry, had taken possession of the latter post. Upon consideration of the case of these wild and ignorant Métis, it is difficult to withhold from them sympathy. Settled government, forms of law, state duty, exactions of citizenship, the sacrifices and burdens of urban civilization—of these he knew but dimly, and held them in a vague horror. He knew that men lived and ground out their lives in cities afar off, and that by means of their wealth they possessed power ; that they had cast envious eyes on the hunting-grounds of the Indian and his half-brother the Métis ; that they sought to wrest him from his lands and mark it off into town lots, people his beloved prairies and exterminate his race. They must mean him ill or they would not work in such a silent, stealthy fashion to disposses him and drive him farther west into unfamiliar fastnesses. There were fifteen thousand souls in the country bordering on Red River, and the majority objected, not without reason, that such an arrangement as had just been carried out should be done without their consent or having been consulted. Was it wonderful that the half-breed, resenting this march of civilization which would trample him and his possessions to atoms, should arise, seize his rude weapons, and prepare for war?

Forlorn case of the Métis.

It is true the insurrection of 1869–70 could have been averted. It would have been easy, through an agent of tact and eloquence, to have dispelled the illusions which had taken possession of the Métis, and to have restored confidence as to the policy of Canada. But was it the Hudson's Bay Company's duty to enlighten the aggrieved inhabitants? The Company who had been bullied and badgered and threatened with confiscation unless it agreed to a renunciation of its rights? Was it the fault of the Company that several thousand wild Métis children of the wilderness, passionately attached to the

old order of things, were in their hearts loyal to the Company, which fed and clothed and administered law to them? *

The insurgents, growing bolder, had taken possession of Fort Garry, where a council of half-breeds was held and the inhabitants called upon to send delegates to a national convention. The English colonists accepted the invitation, but were soon made aware that Riel and his supporters were resolved on more desperate measures than they could themselves countenance. The authority of the Company had been observed; but it was now disregarded; the books and records of the Council of Assiniboia were seized, and on the 1st December a "Bill of Rights" was passed by the "Provisional Government." This act of open rebellion caused the secession of the English; insurgency was now rampant and many of the inhabitants found themselves incarcerated in gaol. Then followed the illegal infliction of capital punishment upon Thomas Scott, a young Orangeman, and the despatch of Colonel (now Lord) Wolseley to the seat of trouble. Leaving Toronto on the 25th of May, 1870, Wolseley and his force, after a long and arduous journey, arrived at Fort Garry on the 24th of August. But the rebellion was already over, and the chief instigator and his companions had fled.

For many years the Company's officers in charge of the various districts in Rupert's Land had annually met in Council for the regulation and discussion of affairs of the fur-trade in general. Regarding themselves as true partners of the Company, they naturally looked to share with the shareholders in the sum agreed to be paid by Canada for its territory.

In July, just one month before the entrance of the future hero of Tel-el-Kebir and the British troops into Fort Garry, a last meeting of the council of officers of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company was held at the post known as Norway House. It was presided over by Fort Garry's Governor.

* "It is an undoubted fact," remarks General Sir William Butler, "that warning had been given to the Dominion Government of the state of feeling amongst the half-breeds, and the phrase, 'they are only eaters of pemmican,' so cutting to the Métis, was thus first originated by a distinguished Canadian politician."

Mr. Donald Alexander Smith,* a servant since boyhood of the Company. At this meeting it was decided to represent the claims of the officers to the partners in England. To this end Mr. Smith was unanimously appointed their representative, he undertaking the task of presenting their claims. The London shareholders were by no means immediately acquiescent. But although Sir Stafford Northcote presided over some turbulent meetings in Fenchurch Street, the claims of the "wintering partners" were ultimately recognized in the only manner possible. Out of the £300,000 paid by the Dominion, the sum of £107,000 was divided amongst the officers for the relinquishment of their claims.

Turbulent meetings at Hudson's Bay House.

The Governor of the Company, in his report to the shareholders in November, stated that "since the holding of the General Court on the 28th June, the Committee have been engaged in proceeding with the re-organization of the fur-trade, and have entered into an agreement with the Chief Factors and Chief Traders for revoking the Deed Poll of 1834, and settling claims arising under it upon the terms sanctioned by the proprietors at the last General Court. They have also prepared the draft of a new Deed Poll adopted to the altered circumstances of the trade."

A new era had thus begun in the history of the Honourable Company of Merchants-Adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay.

* The distinguished philanthropist, the present Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, High Commissioner for Canada in London and Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.



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THE TRADING ROOM AT A HUDSON'S BAY POST.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1821–1871.

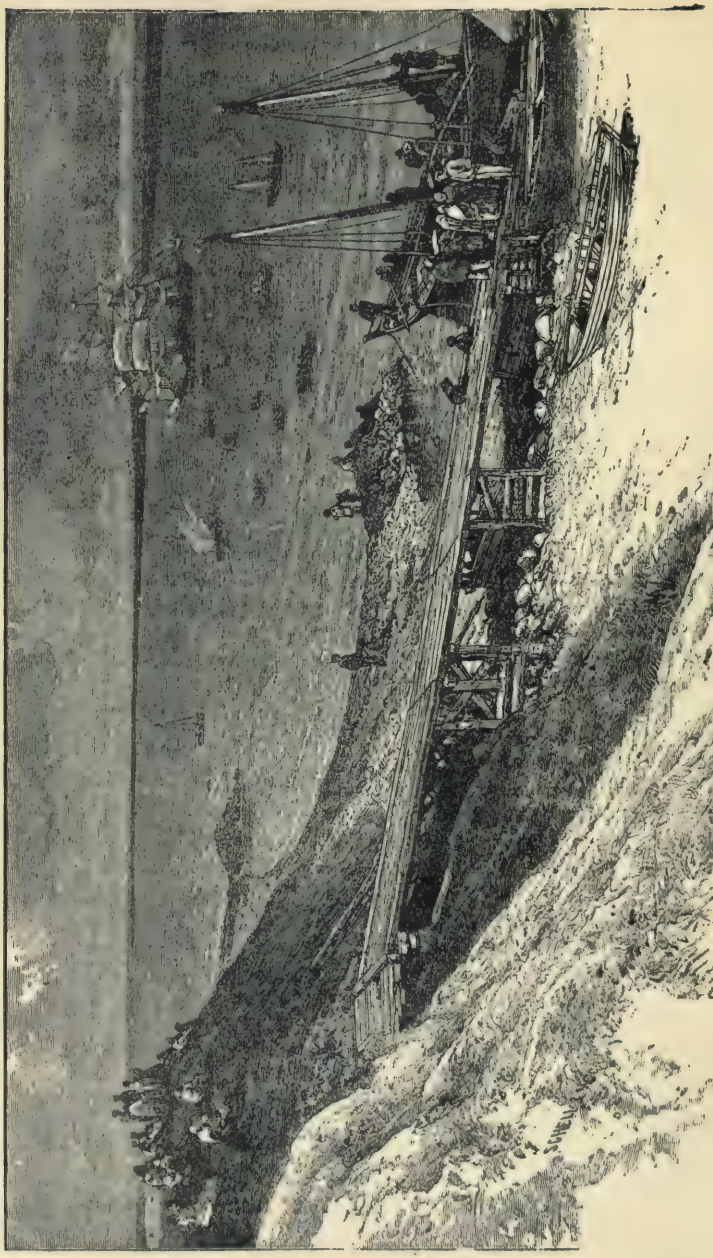
The Company still King in the North-West—Its Forts Described—Fort Garry—Fort Vancouver—Franklin—Walla Walla—Yukon—Kamloops—Samuel Black—Mountain House—Fort Pitt—Policy of the Great Company.

The Company, in yielding the sovereignty of the Great North-West to Canada, was still a king, though crown and sceptre had been taken from it. Its commercial ascendancy was no whit injured ; it is still one of the greatest corporations and the greatest fur company in the world. But new interests have arisen ; its pristine pride, splendour and dignity, would now be out of place. The old lion has been shorn of its mane, and his roar is now no longer heard in the Great North-West. It no longer crouches in the path of progress determined to sell dearly the smallest sacrifice of its ancient rights and privileges ; it is ready to co-operate with the settler and explorer, and all its whilom enemies.

Yet, since 1871, its history has not been without many stirring passages. Its long record of steady work, enterprise, and endurance, has never been greater. Its commanding influence with the Indians, and with a large number of the colonists, has enabled it to assist the authorities in many ways and often in forwarding the public interests, suppressing disorder and securing the good-will of the Red men who inhabit Canada. The Great Dominion owes much to the Great Company.

Canada's debt to the Company.

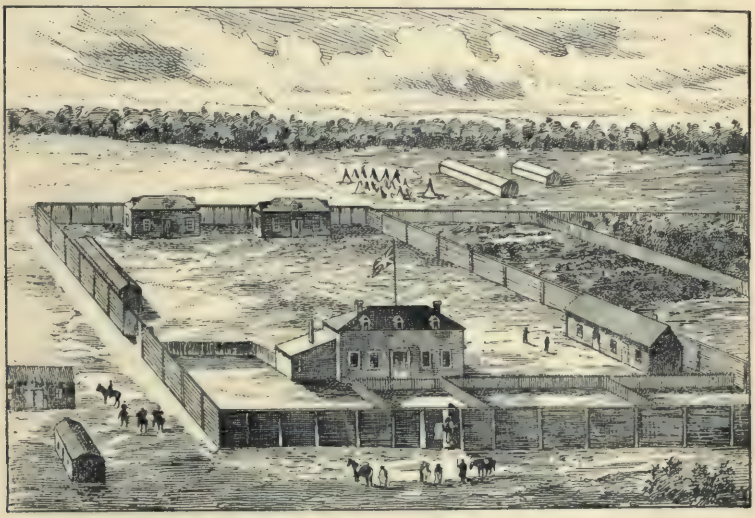
The posts of the Company reach from the stern coasts of Labrador to the frontiers of Alaska, and throughout this enormous region it yet controls the traffic with the aborigines. To-day there are one hundred and twenty-six posts at which this active trade is conducted, besides those numerous wintering stations or outposts, which migrate according to circumstances and mercantile conditions.



YORK FACTORY. ARRIVAL OF HUDSON'S BAY CO.'S SHIP. (*By permission, from "Picturesque Canada."*)

The forts of the Company in Rupert's Land and on the Pacific, with few exceptions, all resembled each other. When permanent, they were surrounded by palisades about one hundred yards square. The pickets were of poles and logs ten or fifteen inches in diameter, sunk into the ground and rising fifteen or twenty feet above it. Split slabs were sometimes used instead of round poles; and at two diagonally opposite corners, raised above the tops of the pickets, two wooden bastions were placed so as to command a view of the country.

Latter-day forts of the Company.



FORT PELLY.

From two to six guns were mounted in each of these bastions —four six or twelve-pounders, each with its aperture like the port-hole of a ship. The ground floor beneath served as a magazine. Within the pickets were erected houses, according to necessity, store and dwelling being most conspicuous.

The older forts have already been described. When Fort Garry was constructed it became the Company's chief post and headquarters. High stone walls, having round towers pierced for cannon at the corners, enclosed a square wherein

were substantial wooden buildings, including the storehouses, dwellings, the Governor's residence and the gaol. Some distance below Fort Garry, on Red River, was Stone Fort, which comprised about four acres, with numerous buildings.

The chief establishment of the Saskatchewan district was Fort Edmonton. It was of sexagonal form, with pickets, battlemented gateways and bastions. Here were the usual buildings, including the carpenter's shop, blacksmith's forge and windmill. At Fort Edmonton were made and repaired, boats, carts, sleighs, harness and other articles and appliances for the annual voyage to York Factory, and for traffic between posts. There was also here a large and successful farm, where wheat, barley and vegetables were raised in abundance.

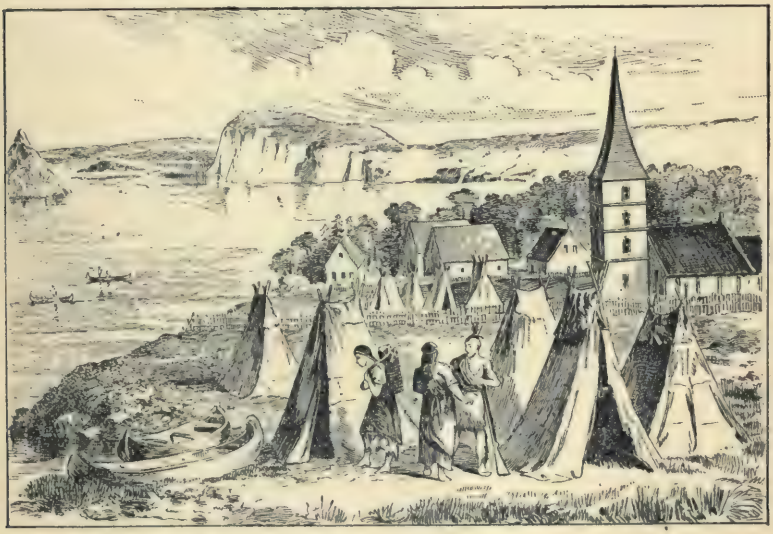
How different was Fort Franklin, a rough, pine-log hut on the shore of Great Bear Lake, containing a single apartment eighteen by twenty feet! It was roofed with sticks and moss, and the interstices between the logs were filled with mud.

In 1825 was built Fort Vancouver, the metropolitan establishment of the Company on the Pacific. It stood on the north side of the Columbia River, six miles above the eastern mouth of the Willamette. At first located at the highest point of some sloping land, about a mile from the river, this site was found disadvantageous to transport and communication, and the fort was moved a few years later to within a quarter of a mile of the Columbia. The plan presented, the familiar parallelogram, but much larger than usual, of about seven hundred and fifty feet in length and five hundred in breadth. The interior was divided into two courts, with about forty buildings, all of wood, except the powder magazine, which was of stone. In the centre, facing the main entrance, stood the Governor's residence, with the dining-room, smoking-room, and public sitting-room or bachelors' hall, the latter serving also for a museum of Indian relics and other curiosities. Single men, clerks and others, made the bachelors' hall their place of resort, but artisans and servants were not admitted. The residence was the only two-storey house in the fort, and before its door were mounted two old eighteen-pounders. Two

Fort Vancouver.

swivel guns stood before the quarters of the chief factor. A prominent position was occupied by the Roman Catholic chapel, to which the majority of the fort's inmates resorted, the dining-hall serving for the smaller number of Church of England worshippers. The other buildings were dwellings for officers and men, school and warehouses, retail stores and artisan shops. The interior of the dwellings exhibited, as a rule, an unpainted pine-board panel, with bunks for bedsteads, and a few other simple pieces of furniture.

Another post on the Pacific, of different character and greater strength, was Fort Walla Walla. It stood on the site



FORT SIMPSON.

of Fort Nez Percé, which was established when the Indians attacked Ogden's party of fur-traders here in 1818. The assault was repelled; but it was found necessary as a safeguard to rear this retreat. Fort Walla Walla was built of adobe and had a military establishment.

A strong fort was Fort Rupert, on the north-east coast of Vancouver Island. For a stockade, huge pine trees were sunk into the ground and fastened together on the inside with

beams. Round the interior ran a gallery, and at two opposite corners were flanking bastions mounting four nine-pounders. Within were the usual shops and buildings, while smaller stockades protected the garden and out-houses.

Fort Yukon was the most remote post of the Company. It was beyond the line of Russian America, and consequently invited comparison with the smaller and meaner Russian establishments. Its commodious dwellings for officers and men had smooth floors, open fire-places, glazed windows, and plastered walls. Its gun room, fur press, ice and meat wells were the delight and astonishment of visitors, white and red.

After the treaty of 1846, by which the United States obtained possession of Oregon territory, the headquarters of



York Factory.

the Company on the Pacific Coast were transferred from Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria. This post was enclosed one hundred yards square by cedar pickets twenty feet high. At the north-east and south-west corners were octagonal bastions mounted with six six-pounders. It had been founded three years earlier as a trading post and depot for whalers, and possessed more than three hundred acres under cultivation, besides a large dairy farm, from which the Russian colonies in Alaska received supplies.

Old Fort Kamloops was first called Fort Thompson, having been begun by David Thompson, astronomer of the North-West Company, on his overland journey from Montreal to Astoria, by way of Yellowhead Pass, in 1810. It was the

capital of the Thompson River district, and one of the oldest in all the Oregon region. After Thompson, hither came Alexander Ross, who, in 1812, conducted operations there on behalf of Astor's Pacific Fur Company. After the coalition in 1821, the veteran fur-trader, John McLeod, was in charge of the Thompson River district. Then came Ermatinger, who presided at Kamloops in 1828, when Governor Simpson visited the fort and harangued the neighbouring Indians, beseeching them to be "honest, temperate and frugal; to love their friends, the fur-traders, and above all to bring in their heaps of peltries, and receive therefor the goods of the Company."

The post was not without thrilling legends and abundance of romance. It was here that the Company's officer in command, Samuel Black, in 1840, challenged his brother Scot, and guest, David Douglas, the wandering botanist, to fight a duel, because the latter bluntly, one night, over his rum and dried salmon, had stigmatized the Honourable Adventurers as "not possessing a soul above a beaver skin." Black repelled in fury such an assertion; but Douglas refused to fight. He took his departure, only to meet his death shortly afterwards by falling into a pit at Hawaii, while homeward bound.

Legend of Kamloops.

If this was the fate of the calumniator of the Company, that of its defender was not less tragic; for soon after his display of loyalty, while residing at Fort Kamloops, he was assassinated by the nephew of a friendly neighbouring chief, named Wanquille, "for having charmed his uncle's life away." Black's successor, John Tod, built a new fort on the opposite side of the river, which differed but little from the later fortresses of the Company. There were seven houses, including stores, dwellings and shops, enclosed in palisades fifteen feet in height, with gates on two sides and bastions at two opposite angles.

Early in 1848 a small post was erected by the Company on the Fraser River, near a village of the Lachincos, adjacent to the rapids ascended by Alexander Anderson the previous year. The fort was called Yale, in honour of Chief Factor

Yale, who was at that time in charge of Fort Langley. It was the only post on that wild stream, the Fraser, between Langley and Alexandria, a distance of some three hundred miles. Two causes led to its erection: the Waiilatpu massacre in 1847, and the conclusion of the Oregon Treaty of 1846, which placed the boundary line several degrees north of the Lower Columbia.



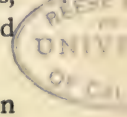
FATHER LACOMBE.

Mountain House.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable of the Company's posts was Mountain House. "Every precaution known to the traders," writes a visitor of thirty years ago, "has been put in force to prevent the possibility of a surprise during 'a trade.' Bars and bolts, and places to fire down at the Indians who are trading, abound in every direction; so dreaded is the name borne by the Blackfeet, that it is thus their trading-post has been

constructed." Eighty years ago, the Company had a post far south of the Bow River, in the very heart of the Blackfeet country; but, despite all precautions, it was frequently plundered and finally burnt down by the Blackfeet, and no attempt was since made to construct another fort in their country.

The hilly country around Fort Pitt was frequently the scenes of Indian ambush and attack, and on more than one occasion the post itself has been captured by the Blackfeet. The surroundings are a favourite camping-ground of the Crees; and it was found difficult to persuade the Blackfeet that the factors and traders there are not the active friends and allies of their enemies. In fact, they regarded both Fort Pitt and Fort Carlton as places belonging to another company from that which ruled at Mountain House and Edmonton. "If it was the same company," they were wont to say, "how could they give our enemies, the Crees, guns and powder; for do they not give us guns and powder, too?"



The strength of the Company throughout the vast region where their rule was paramount, was rather a moral strength than a physical one. Its roots lay deep in the heart of the savage, who in time came to regard the great corporation as the embodiment of all that was good, and great, and true, and powerful. He knew that under its sway justice was secured to him; that if innocent he would be unharmed, that if guilty he would inevitably pay the penalty of his transgression. The prairie was wide, the forests were trackless, but in all those thousands of miles there came to be no haven for the horse-thief, the incendiary or the murderer, where he would be free, in his beleaguered fastness, to elude or defy Nemesis. The Company made it its business to find and punish the real offender; they did not avenge themselves on his friends or tribe. But punishment was certain—blood was paid for in blood, and there was no trial. Often did an intrepid factor, trader or clerk, enter a hostile camp, himself destitute of followers, walk up to the trembling malefactor, raise his gun or pistol, take aim, fire, and seeing his man fall, stalk away again to the nearest fort.

"This certainty of punishment," it was said, "acted upon the savage mind with all the power of a superstition. Felons trembled before the white man's justice, as in the presence of the Almighty."

That sense of injustice which rankled in the bosoms of the other Indians of the Continent, causing them to continually break out and give battle to their tormentors and oppressors—a warfare which, in 1870, had cost the United States more than five hundred million of dollars, could not exist. The Red men, as Red men, could have no well-founded grievance against the Company, which treated white and red with equity.

The Great Company's Policy.

"I have no hesitation in attributing the great success attendant for so many years upon the Indian policy of the Hudson's Bay Company," wrote an American Commissioner, Lieutenant Scott, in 1867, "to the following facts:—

"The savages are treated justly—receiving protection in life and property from the laws which they are forced to obey.

"There is no Indian Bureau with attendant complications.

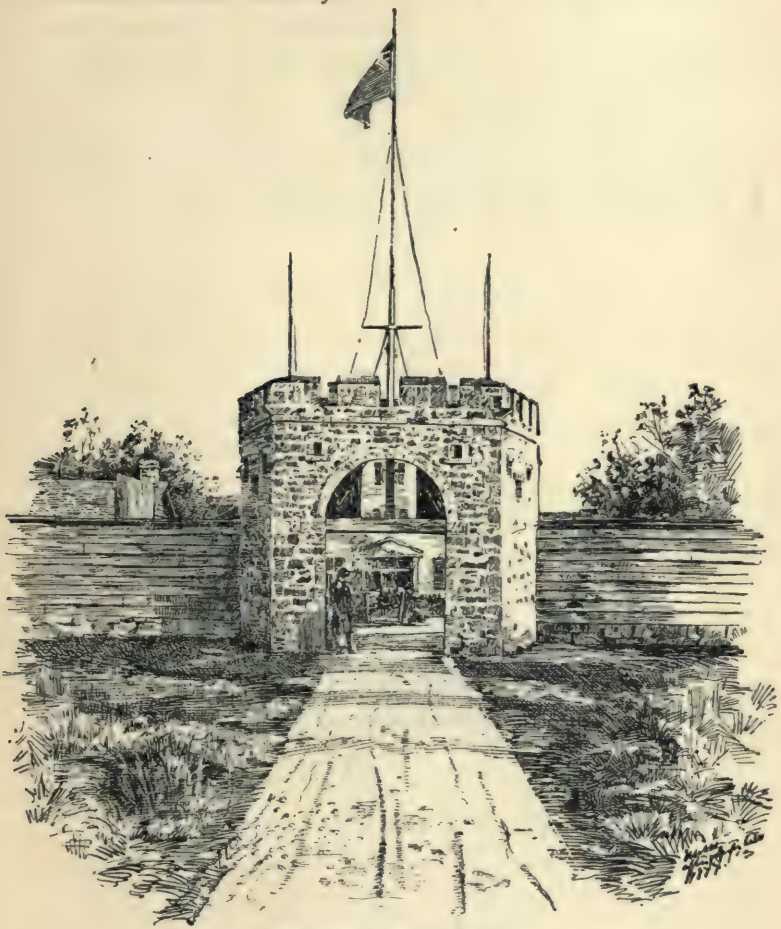
"There is no pretended recognition of the Indian's title in fee-simple to the lands on which he roams for fish or game.

"Intoxicating liquors were not introduced amongst these people so long as the Hudson's Bay Company preserved the monopoly of trade.

"Prompt punishment follows the perpetration of crime, and from time to time the presence of a gunboat serves to remind the savages along the coast of the power of their masters. Not more than two years ago the Fort Rupert Indians were severely punished for refusing to deliver up certain animals demanded by the civil magistrate. Their village was bombarded and completely destroyed by Her Britannic Majesty's gunboat *Clio*."

What was the direct consequence of such a policy? That among distant and powerful tribes trading posts were built and maintained, well stocked with goods tempting to savage

cupidity, yet peacefully conducted by one or two white men. There was not a regular soldier in all this territory (except the marines on shipboard and at Esquimault) and yet white men could hunt through the length and breadth of the land in almost absolute security.



GATEWAY TO FORT GARRY.
(Drawn by Edmund Morris, from a Photo taken in 1877.)

Search all Europe and Asia, and you will find no parallel to the present sway of the Company, for it feeds and clothes, amuses and instructs, as well as rules nine-tenths of its subjects, from the Esquimaux tribes of Ungava to the Loucheaux

at Fort Simpson, thousands of miles away—all look to it as to a father.

The communication with the outside world is slight, yet the thread that binds is encrusted with hoar frost, reaching far away to that little island in the North Sea which we call Britain. If these strong men, immured for years in the icy wildernesses are moved by the news which reaches them twice in the year, through a thousand miles and more of snow, it is British news. Kitchener's victory at Khartoum sent a patriotic thrill through thousands of bosoms six months after it became known to the Englishman who is content to live at home.



THE HUDSON'S BAY POSTS.

In their Report of 28th June, 1872, the Governor and Committee report the details of the varied posts from Ocean to Ocean of the Hudson's Bay Company, as follows :—

Statement of Land belonging to the HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, *exclusive of their claim to one-twentieth of the Land set out for settlement in the "Fertile Belt."*

District.	Post.		Acres of Land
Lake Huron	1	La Cloche	6,400
Temiscaminque	2	Kakababeagino	10
Superior	3	Long Lake	10
United States	4	Georgetown	1,133
Manitoba, or Red River Settlement	5	Fort Garry	500
	6	Lower Fort	500
	7	White Horse Plains	500
Manitoba Lake	8	Oak Point	50
Portage la Prairie	9		1,000
Lac la Pluie	10	Fort Alexander	500
	11	Fort Frances	500
	12	Eagles Nest	20
	13	Big Island	20
	14	Lac du Bennet	20
	15	Rat Portage	50
	16	Shoal Lake	20
	17	Lake of the Woods	50
	18	White Fish Lake	20
	19	English River	20
	20	Hungry Hall	20
	21	Trout Lake	20
	22	Clear Water Lake	20
	23	Sandy Point	20
Swan River	24	Fort Pelly	3,000
	25	Fort Ellice	3,000
	26	Qu'Appelle Lakes	2,500
	27	Touchwood Hills	500
	28	Shoal River	50
	29	Manitoban	50
	30	Fairford	100

District.	Post.		Acres of Land
Cumberland	31	Cumberland House	100
	32	Fort la Corne	3,000
	33	Pelican Lake	50
	34	Moose Woods	1,000
	35	The Pas	25
	36	Moose Lake	50
	37	Grand Rapid Portage	100 50 Acres at each end of Portage.
Saskatchewan	38	Edmonton House	3,000
	39	Rocky Mountain House	500
	40	Fort Victoria	3,000
	41	St. Paul	3,000
	42	Fort Pitt	3,000
	43	Battle River	3,000
	44	Carlton House	3,000
	45	Fort Albert	3,000
	46	Whitefish Lake	500
	47	Lac la Biche	1,000
	48	Fort Assiniboine	50
	49	Lesser Slave Lake	500
	50	Lac St. Anne	500
	51	Lac la Nun	500
	52	St. Albert	1,000
	53	Pigeon Lake	100
	54	Old White Mud Fort	50
English River	55	Isle à la Crosse	50
	56	Rapid River	5
	57	Portage da Loche	20
	58	Green Lake	100
	59	Cold Lake	10
	60	Deers Lake	5
York	61	York Factory	100
	62	Churchill	10
	63	Severn	10
	64	Trout Lake	10
	65	Oxford	100
	66	Jackson's Bay	10
	67	God's Lake	10
	68	Island Lake	10
Norway House	69	Norway House	100
	70	Berens River	25
	71	Grand Rapid	10
	72	Nelson's River	10
Albany	73	Albany Factory	100
	74	Martin's Falls	10
	75	Osnaburg	25
	76	Lac Seul	500
East Main	77	Little Whale River	50
	78	Great Whale River	50
	79	Fort George	25

District.		Post.	Acres of Land
Moose	80	Moose Factory	100
	81	Hannah Bay	10
	82	Abitibi	10
	83	New Brunswick	25
Rupert's River	84	Rupert's House	50
	85	Mistassing	10
	86	Temiskamay	10
	87	Woswonaby	10
	88	Meehiskun	10
	89	Pike Lake	10
	90	Nitchequon	10
	91	Kamapiscan	10
Kinogumissee	92	Matawagauinque	50
	93	Kuckatoosh	10
Labrador	94	Fort Nascopie	75
	95	Outposts do	25
	96	Fort Chimo (Ungava)	100
	97	South River, Outposts	30
	98	George's River	50
	99	Whale River	50
	100	North's River	25
	101	False River	25
Athabasca	102	Fort Chippewyan	10
	103	Fort Vermilion	500
	104	Fort Dunvegan	50
	105	Fort St. John's	20
	106	Forks of Athabasca River	10
	107	Battle River	5
	108	Fond du Lac	5
	109	Salt River	5
McKenzie River	110	Fort Simpson	100
	111	Fort Liard	300
	112	Fort Nelson	200
	113	The Rapids	100
	114	Hay River	20
	115	Fort Resolution	20
	116	Fort Rae	10
	117	Fond du Lac	10
	118	Fort Norman	10
	119	Fort Good Hope	10
	120	Peel's River	10
	121	Lapierre's House	10
	122	Fort Halkett	100

WESTERN DEPARTMENT.

District.		Post.	Acres of Land
Vancouver's Island	123	Victoria, including Town Lots, about	70
	124	Esquimault (Puget's Sound Company's Land)	2,300
	125	Uplands Farm	1,125
	126	North Dairy Farm	460
British Columbia	127	Fort Alexander	100
	128	Fort George	100
	129	Fraser's Lake	100
	130	Stuart's Lake	100
	131	McLeod's Lake	100
	132	Connolly's Lake	100
	133	Babine	100
	134	Chilcotin	100
		Five other places	100
	135	Fort Dallas	50
	136	Fort Berens	50
	137	Fort Shepherd	100
	138	Fort Simpson	100
	139	Salmon River	50
	140	Langley and Langley Farm	2,220
	141	Yale, sundry small blocks	
	142	Hope	5
	143	Kamloops	1,976
	144	Similkameen	1,140
		Barkerville	Town Lots.
		Quesnel	



APPENDIX.

THE CHARTER INCORPORATING THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

Granted by His Majesty King Charles the Second, in the 22nd Year of his Reign, A.D. 1670.

CHARLES THE SECOND, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.

To all to whom these presents shall come, greeting:

WHEREAS our dear entirely beloved Cousin, Prince Rupert, Count Palatine of the Rhine, Duke of Bavaria and Cumberland, &c.; Christopher Duke of Albemarle, William Earl of Craven, Henry Lord Arlington, Anthony Lord Ashley, Sir John Robinson, and Sir Robert Vyner, Knights and Baronets; Sir Peter Colleton, Baronet; Sir Edward Hungerford, Knight of the Bath; Sir Paul Neele, Knight; Sir John Griffith and Sir Philip Carteret, Knights; James Hayes, John Kirk, Francis Millington, William Prettyman, John Fenn, Esquires; and John Portman, Citizen and Goldsmith of London; have, at their own great cost, and charges, undertaken an expedition for Hudson's Bay in the north-west part of America, for the discovery of a new passage into the South Sea, and for the finding some trade for furs, minerals, and other considerable commodities, and by such their undertaking have already made such discoveries as to encourage them to proceed further in pursuance of their said design, by means whereof there may probably arise very great advantages to us and our kingdom.

And whereas the said undertakers, for their further encouragement in the said design, have humbly besought us to incorporate them, and grant unto them and their successors the sole trade and commerce of all those seas, straits, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks and sounds, in whatsoever latitude they shall be, that lie within the entrance of the straits commonly called the Hudson's Straits, together with all the lands, countries and territories upon the coasts and confines of the seas, straits, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks and sounds aforesaid, which are not now actually possessed by any of our subjects, or by the subjects of any other Christian Prince or State.

Now know ye, that we, being desirous to promote all endeavours tending to the public good of our people, and to encourage the said undertaking, have, of our especial grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, given, granted, ratified and confirmed, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do give, grant, ratify and confirm, unto our said Cousin, Prince Rupert, Christopher Duke of Albemarle, William Earl of Craven,

Henry Lord Arlington, Anthony Lord Ashley, Sir John Robinson, Sir Robert Vyner, Sir Peter Colleton, Sir Edward Hungerford, Sir Paul Neele, Sir John Griffith and Sir Philip Carteret, James Hayes, John Kirk, Francis Millington, William Prettyman, John Fenn and John Portman, that they, and such others as shall be admitted into the said society as is hereafter expressed, shall be one body corporate and politic, in deed and in name, by the name of "The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay," and them by the name of "The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay," one body corporate and politic, in deed and in name, really and fully forever, for us, our heirs and successors, we do make, ordain, constitute, establish, confirm and declare by these presents, and that by the same name of Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, they shall have perpetual succession, and that they and their successors, by the name of The Governor and Company of Adventures trading into Hudson's Bay, be, and at all times hereafter shall be personable and capable in law to have, purchase, receive, possess, enjoy and retain lands, rents, privileges, liberties, jurisdictions, franchises and hereditaments, of what kind, nature or quality so ever they be, to them and their successors; and also to give, grant, demise, alien, assign and dispose lands, tenements, and hereditaments, and to do and execute all and singular other things by the same name that to them shall or may appertain to do; and that they and their successors, by the name of The Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, may plead and be impleaded, answer and be answered, defend and be defended, in whatsoever courts and places, before whatsoever judges and justices and other persons and officers, in all and singular actions, pleas, suits, quarrels, causes and demands whatsoever, of whatsoever kind, nature or sort, in such manner and form as any other our liege people of this our realm of England, being persons able and capable in law, may or can have, purchase, receive, possess, enjoy, retain, give, grant, demise, alien, assign, dispose, plead, defend and be defended, do, permit and execute: and that the said Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, and their successors, may have a common seal to serve for all the causes and businesses of them and their successors, and that it shall and may be lawful to the said Governor and Company, and their successors, the same seal, from time to time, at their will and pleasure, to break, change, and to make anew or alter, as to them shall seem expedient.

And further we will, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, we do ordain that there shall be from henceforth one of the same company to be elected and appointed in such form as hereafter in these presents is expressed, which shall be called the Governor of the said Company; and that the said Governor and Company shall or may select seven of their number, and in such form as hereafter in these presents is

expressed, which shall be called the Committee of the said Company, which Committee of seven, or any three of them, together with the Governor or Deputy Governor of the said Company for the time being shall have the direction of the voyages of and for the said Company, and the provision of the shipping and merchandises thereunto belonging, and also the sale of all merchandises, goods and other things returned, in all or any the voyages or ships of or for the said Company, and the managing and handling of all other business, affairs and things belonging to the said Company: And we will, ordain and grant by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that they, the said Governor and Company, and their successors, shall from henceforth for ever be ruled, ordered and governed according to such manner and form as is hereafter in these presents expressed, and not otherwise; and that they shall have, hold, retain and enjoy the grants, liberties, privileges, jurisdictions and immunities only hereafter in these presents granted and expressed, and no other: And for the better execution of our will and grant in this behalf we have assigned, nominated, constituted and made, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, we do assign, constitute and make our said Cousin Prince Rupert, to be the first and present Governor of the said Company, and to continue in the said office from the date of these presents until the 10th November then next following, if he, the said Prince Rupert, shall so long live, and so until a new Governor be chosen by the said Company in form hereafter expressed: And also we have assigned, nominated and appointed, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, we do assign, nominate and constitute the said Sir John Robinson, Sir John Vyner, Sir Peter Colleton, James Hayes, John Kirk, Francis Millington and John Portman to be the seven first and present Committee of the said Company, from the date of these presents until the said 10th day of November then also next following, and so on until new Committees shall be chosen in form hereafter expressed: And further we will and grant by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor and Company for the time being, or the greater part of them present at any public assembly, commonly called the Court General, to be holden for the said Company, the Governor of the said Company being always one, from time to time elect, nominate and appoint one of the said Company to be Deputy to the said Governor, which Deputy shall take a corporal oath, before the Governor and three or more of the Committee of the said Company for the time being, well, truly and faithfully to execute his said office of Deputy to the Governor of the said Company, and after his oath so taken, shall and may from time to time, in the absence of the said Governor, exercise and execute the office of Governor of the said Company, in such sort as the said Governor ought to do: And further we

will and grant by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, unto the said Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, and their successors, that they, or the greater part of them, whereof the Governor for the time being or his Deputy to be one, from time to time, and at all times hereafter, shall and may have authority and power, yearly and every year, between the first and last day of November, to assemble and meet together in some convenient place, to be appointed from time to time by the Governor, or in his absence by the Deputy of the said Governor for the time being, and that they being so assembled, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor or Deputy of the said Governor, and the said Company for the time being, or the greater part of them which then shall happen to be present, whereof the Governor of the said Company or his Deputy for the time being to be one, to elect and nominate one of the said Company, which shall be Governor of the said Company for one whole year then next following, which person being so elected and nominated to be Governor of the said Company, as is aforesaid, before he be admitted to the execution of the said office, shall take a corporal oath before the last Governor, being his predecessor, or his Deputy, and any three or more of the Committee of the said Company for the time being, that he shall from time to time well and truly execute the office of Governor of the said Company in all things concerning the same; and that immediately after the said oath so taken he shall and may execute and use the said office of Governor of the said Company for one whole year from thence next following: And in like sort we will and grant that as well every one of the above-named to be of the said Company of fellowship, as all others hereafter to be admitted or free of the said Company, shall take a corporal oath before the Governor of the said Company or his Deputy for the time being to such effect as by the said Governor and Company or the greater part of them in any public Court to be held for the said Company, shall be in reasonable and legal manner set down and devised, before they shall be allowed or admitted to trade or traffic as a freeman of the said Company: And further we will and grant by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that the said Governor or Deputy Governor, and the rest of the said Company, and their successors for the time being, or the greater part of them, whereof the Governor or Deputy-Governor from time to time to be one, shall and may from time to time, and at all times hereafter, have power and authority, yearly and every year, between the first and last day of November, to assemble and meet together in some convenient place, from time to time to be appointed by the said Governor of the said Company, or in his absence by his Deputy; and that they being so assembled, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor or his Deputy, and the Company for the time being, or the greater part of them which then shall happen to be present, whereof the Governor of the said Company or his

Deputy for the time being to be one, to elect and nominate seven of the said Company, which shall be a Committee of the said Company for one whole year from thence next ensuing, which persons being so elected and nominated to be a Committee of the said Company as aforesaid, before they be admitted to the execution of their office, shall take a corporal oath before the Governor or his Deputy, and any three or more of the said Committee of the said Company, being their last predecessors, that they and every of them shall well and faithfully perform their said office of Committees in all things concerning the same, and that immediately after the said oath so taken, they shall and may execute and use their said office of Committees of the said Company for one whole year from thence next following: And moreover, our will and pleasure is, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, we do grant under the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that when and as often as it shall happen, the Governor or Deputy Governor of the said Company for the time being, at any time within one year after that he shall be nominated, elected and sworn to the office of the Governor of the said Company as is aforesaid, to die or to be removed from the said office, which Governor or Deputy Governor not demeaning himself well in his said office WE WILL to be removable at the pleasure of the rest of the said Company, or the greater part of them which shall be present at their public assemblies commonly called their General Courts, holden for the said Company, that then and so often it shall and may be lawful to and for the residue of the said Company for the time being, or the greater part of them, within a convenient time after the death or removing of any such Governor or Deputy Governor, to assemble themselves in such convenient place as they shall think fit, for the election of the Governor or the Deputy Governor of the said Company; and that the said Company, or the greater part of them, being then and there present, shall and may, then and there, before their departure from the said place, elect and nominate one other of the said Company to be Governor or Deputy Governor for the said Company in the place and stead of him that so died or was removed; which person being so elected and nominated to the office of Governor or Deputy Governor of the said Company, shall have and exercise the said office for and during the residue of the next year, taking first a corporal oath, as is aforesaid, for the due execution thereof; and this to be done from time to time so often as the case shall so require: And also our will and pleasure is, and by these presents for us, our heirs and successors, WE DO GRANT unto the said Governor and Company, that when and as often as it shall happen any person or persons of the Committee of the said Company for the time being, at any time within one year next after they or any of them shall be nominated, elected and sworn to the office of Committee of the said Company as is aforesaid, to die or to be removed from the said office, which Committees not demeaning themselves well in their said office, we

will to be removable at the pleasure of the said Governor and Company or the greater part of them, whereof the Governor of the said Company for the time being or his Deputy to be one, that then and so often, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor, and the rest of the Company for the time being, or the greater part of them, whereof the Governor for the time being or his Deputy to be one, within convenient time after the death or removing of any of the said Committee, to assemble themselves in such convenient place as is or shall be usual and accustomed for the election of the Governor of the said Company, or where else the Governor of the said Company for the time being or his Deputy shall appoint: And that the said Governor and Company, or the greater part of them, whereof the Governor for the time being or his Deputy to be one, being then and there present, shall and may, then and there, before their departure from the said place, elect and nominate one or more of the said Company to be the Committee of the said Company in the place and stead of him or them that so died, or were or was so removed, which person or persons so nominated and elected to the office of Committee of the said Company, shall have and exercise the said office for and during the residue of the said year, taking first a corporal oath, as is aforesaid, for the due execution thereof, and this to be done from time to time, so often as the case shall require:

And to the end the said Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay may be encouraged to undertake and effectually to prosecute the said design, of our more especial grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, we have given, granted and confirmed, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, DO give, grant and confirm, unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, the sole trade and commerce of all these seas, straits, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks and sounds, in whatsoever latitude they shall be, that lie within the entrance of the straits, commonly called Hudson's Straits, together with all the lands and territories upon the countries, coasts, and confines of the seas, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks and sounds aforesaid, that are not already actually possessed by or granted to any of our subjects, or possessed by the subjects of any other Christian Prince or State, with the fishing of all sorts of fish, whales, sturgeons and all other royal fishes, in the seas, bays, inlets and rivers within the premises, and the fish therein taken, together with the royalty of the sea upon the coasts within the limits aforesaid, and all mines royal, as well discovered as not discovered, of gold, silver, gems and precious stones, to be found or discovered within the territories, limits and places aforesaid, and that the said land be from henceforth reckoned and reputed as one of our plantations or colonies in America, called "Rupert's Land."

And further we do, by these presents for us, our heirs and successors, make, create, and constitute the said Governor and Company for the time being, and their successors, the true and absolute lords and proprietors

of the same territory, limits and places, and of all other the premises, saving always the faith, allegiance and sovereign dominion due to us, our heirs and successors, for the same to have, hold, possess and enjoy the said territory, limits and places, and all and singular other the premises hereby granted as aforesaid, with their and every of their rights, members, jurisdictions, prerogatives, royalties and appurtenances whatsoever, to them the said Governor and Company, and their successors for ever, to be holden of us, our heirs and successors, as of our manor at East Greenwich, in our County of Kent, in free and common soccage, and not in capite or by Knight's service, yielding and paying yearly to us, our heirs and successors, for the same, two elks and two black beavers, whensoever and as often as we, our heirs and successors, shall happen to enter into the said countries, territories and regions hereby granted.

And further, our will and pleasure is, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, we do grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor and Company, and their successors, from time to time, to assemble themselves, for or about any the matters, causes, affairs, or business of the said trade, in any place or places for the same convenient, within our dominions or elsewhere, and there to hold Court for the said Company and the affairs thereof; and that also, it shall and may be lawful to and for them, and the greater part of them, being so assembled, and that shall then and there be present, in any such place or places, whereof the Governor or his Deputy for the time being to be one, to make, ordain and constitute such and so many reasonable laws, constitutions, orders and ordinances as to them, or the greater part of them, being then and there present, shall seem necessary and convenient for the good government of the said Company, and of all governors of colonies, forts and plantations, factors, masters, mariners and other officers employed or to be employed in any of the territories and lands aforesaid, and in any of their voyages, and for the better advancement and continuance of the said trade or traffic and plantations, and the same laws, constitutions, orders and ordinances so made, to put in use and execute accordingly, and at their pleasure to revoke and alter the same or any of them, as the occasion shall require: And that the said Governor and Company, so often as they shall make, ordain or establish any such laws, constitutions, orders and ordinances, in such form as aforesaid shall and may lawfully impose, ordain, limit and provide such pains, penalties and punishments upon all offenders, contrary to such laws, constitutions, orders and ordinances, or any of them, as to the said Governor and Company for the time being, or the greater part of them, then and there being present, the said Governor or his Deputy being always one, shall seem necessary, requisite or convenient for the observation of the same laws, constitutions, orders and ordinances; and the same fines and amerciaments shall and may, by their officers and servants from time to time to be appointed for that purpose, levy, take and have, to the use of the said

Governor and Company, and their successors, without the impediment of us, our heirs or successors, or any of the officers or ministers of us, our heirs, or successors, and without any account therefore to us, our heirs or successors, to be made: All and singular which laws, constitutions, orders, and ordinances, so as aforesaid to be made, we will to be duly observed and kept under the pains and penalties therein to be contained; so always as the said laws, constitutions, orders and ordinances, fines and amerciaments, be reasonable and not contrary or repugnant, but as near as may be agreeable to the laws, statutes or customs of this our realm.

And furthermore, of our ample and abundant grace, certain knowledge and mere-motion, we have granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that they and their successors, and their factors, servants and agents, for them and on their behalf, and not otherwise, shall forever hereafter have, use and enjoy, not only the whole, entire, and only trade and traffic, and the whole, entire, and only liberty, use and privilege of trading and trafficking to and from the territory, limits and places aforesaid, but also the whole and entire trade and traffic to and from all havens, bays, creeks, rivers, lakes and seas, into which they shall find entrance or passage by water or land out of the territories, limits and places aforesaid; and to and with all the natives and people inhabiting, or which shall inhabit within the territories, limits and places aforesaid; and to and with all other nations inhabiting any the coasts adjacent to the said territories, limits and places which are not already possessed as aforesaid, or whereof the sole liberty or privilege of trade and traffic is not granted to any other of our subjects.

And we, of our further Royal favour, and of our more especial grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, have granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do grant to the said Governor and Company, and to their successors, that neither the said territories, limits and places hereby granted as aforesaid, nor any part thereof, nor the islands, havens, ports, cities, towns, or places thereof or therein contained, shall be visited, frequented or haunted by any of the subjects of us, our heirs or successors, contrary to the true meaning of these presents, and by virtue of our prerogative royal, which we will not have in that behalf argued or brought into question: We straightly charge, command and prohibit for us, our heirs and successors, all the subjects of us, our heirs and successors, of what degree or quality soever they be, that none of them, directly or indirectly do visit, haunt, frequent, or trade, traffic, or adventure, by way of merchandise, into or from any of the said territories, limits, or places hereby granted, or any or either of them, other than the said Governor and Company, and such particular persons as now be or hereafter shall be of that Company, their agents, factors and assigns, unless it be by the license and agreement of the said Governor and Company in writing first had and obtained, under their common seal, to be granted upon pain that every such person or persons that

shall trade or traffic into or from any of the countries, territories or limits aforesaid, other than the said Governor and Company, and their successors, shall incur our indignation, and the forfeiture and the loss of the goods, merchandises and other things whatsoever, which so shall be brought into this realm of England, or any of the dominions of the same, contrary to our said prohibition, or the purport or true meaning of these presents, or which the said Governor and Company shall find, take and seize in other places out of our dominion, where the said Company, their agents, factors or ministers shall trade, traffic or inhabit by the virtue of these our letters patent, as also the ship and ships, with the furniture thereof, wherein such goods, merchandises and other things shall be brought and found; and one-half of all the said forfeitures to be to us, our heirs and successors, and the other half thereof we do, by these presents, clearly and wholly, for us, our heirs and successors, give and grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors: And further, all and every the said offenders, for their said contempt, to suffer such other punishment as to us, our heirs and successors, for so high a contempt, shall seem meet and convenient, and not be in any wise delivered until they and every of them shall become bound unto the said Governor for the time being in the sum of one thousand pounds at the least, at no time then after to trade or traffic into any of the said places, seas, straits, bays, ports, havens or territories aforesaid, contrary to our express commandment in that behalf set down and published: And further, of our more especial grace, we have condescended and granted, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, do grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that we our heirs and successors, will not grant liberty, license or power to any person, or persons whatsoever, contrary to the tenor of these our letters patent, to trade, traffic or inhabit, unto or upon any of the territories, limits or places afore specified, contrary to the true meaning of these presents, without the consent of the said Governor and Company, or the most part of them: And, of our more abundant grace and favour of the said Governor and Company, we do hereby declare our will and pleasure to be, that if it shall so happen that any of the persons free or to be free of the said Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, who shall, before the going forth of any ship or ships appointed for a voyage or otherwise, promise or agree, by writing under his or their hands, to adventure any sum or sums of money towards the furnishing any provision, or maintenance of any voyage or voyages, set forth or to be set forth, or intended or meant to be set forth, by the said Governor and Company, or the most part of them present at any public assembly, commonly called their General Court, shall not, within the space of twenty days next after warning given to him or them by the said Governor or Company, or their known officer or minister, bring in and deliver to the Treasurer or Treasurers appointed for the Company, such sums of money as shall have been expressed and set down in writing by

the said person or persons, subscribed with the name of the said Adventurer or Adventurers, that then and at all times after it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor and Company, or the more part of them present, whereof the said Governor or his Deputy to be one, at any of their General Courts or general assemblies, to remove and disfranchise him or them, and every such person and persons at their wills and pleasures, and he or they so removed and disfranchised, not to be permitted to trade into the countries, territories, and limits aforesaid, or any part thereof, nor to have any adventure or stock going or remaining with or amongst the said Company, without the special license of the said Governor and Company, or the more part of them present at any General Court, first had and obtained in that behalf, any thing before in these presents to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding. And our will and pleasure is, and hereby we do also ordain, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor and Company, or the greater part of them, whereof the Governor for the time being or his Deputy to be one, to admit into and to be of the said Company all such servants or factors, of or for the said Company, and all such others as to them or the most part of them present, at any Court held for the said Company, the Governor or his Deputy being one, shall be thought fit and agreeable with the orders and ordinances made and to be made for the government of the said Company: And further, our will and pleasure is, and by these presents for us, our heirs and successors, we do grant unto the said Governor and Company, and to their successors, that it shall and may be lawful in all elections and by-laws to be made by the General Court of the Adventurers of the said Company, that every person shall have a number of votes according to his stock, that is to say, for every hundred pounds by him subscribed or brought into the present stock, one vote, and that any of those that have subscribed less than one hundred pounds, may join their respective sums to make up one hundred pounds, and have one vote jointly for the same, and not otherwise: And further, of our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, we do, for us, our heirs and successors, grant to and with the said Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, that all lands, islands, territories, plantations, forts, fortifications, factories or colonies, where the said Company's factories and trade are or shall be, within any of the ports or places afore limited, shall be immediately and from henceforth under the power and command of the said Governor and Company, their successors and assigns; saving the faith and allegiance due to be performed to us, our heirs and successors, as aforesaid; and that the said Governor and Company shall have liberty, full power and authority to appoint and establish Governors and all other officers to govern them, and that the Governor and his Council of the several and respective places where the said Company shall have plantations, forts, factories, colonies or places of trade within any of the countries, lands, or territories hereby granted, may have power to judge all persons belonging

to the said Governor and Company, or that shall live under them, in all causes, whether civil or criminal, according to the laws of the kingdom, and to execute justice accordingly; and in case any crime or misdemeanor shall be committed in any of the said Company's plantations, forts, factories, or places of trade within the limits aforesaid, where judicature cannot be executed for want of a Governor and Council there, then in such case it shall and may be lawful for the chief factor of that place and his Council to transmit the party, together with the offence, to such other plantations, factory or fort where there shall be a Governor and Council, where justice may be executed, or into this Kingdom of England, as shall be thought most convenient, there to receive such punishment as the nature of his offence shall deserve: And moreover, our will and pleasure is, and by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, we do give and grant unto the said Governor and Company, and their successors, free liberty and license, in case they conceive it necessary, to send either ships of war, men or ammunition into any of their plantations, forts, factories, or places of trade aforesaid, for the security and defence of the same, and to choose commanders and officers over them, and to give them power and authority, by commission under their common seal, or otherwise, to continue to make peace or war with any prince or people whatsoever, that are not Christians, in any place where the said Company shall have any plantations, forts or factories, or adjacent thereto, and shall be most for the advantage and benefit of the said Governor and Company and of their trade; and also to right and recompense themselves upon the goods, estates, or people of those parts, by whom the said Governor and Company shall sustain any injury, loss or damage, or upon any other people whatsoever, that shall in any way, contrary to the intent of these presents, interrupt, wrong or injure them in their trade, within the said places, territories and limits granted by this Charter: And that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor and Company, and their successors from time to time, and at all times from henceforth, to erect and build such castles, fortifications, forts, garrisons, colonies or plantations, towns or villages, in any parts or places within the limits and bounds granted before in these presents unto the said Governor and Company, as they in their discretion shall think fit and requisite, and for the supply of such as shall be needful and convenient to keep and be in the same, to send out of this kingdom to the said castles, forts, fortifications, garrisons, colonies, plantations, towns or villages, all kinds of clothing, provisions or victuals, ammunition and implements necessary for such purpose, paying the duties and customs for the same, as also to transport and carry over such number of men being willing thereunto, or not prohibited, as they shall think fit, and also to govern them in such legal and reasonable manner as the said Governor and Company shall think best, and to inflict punishment for misdemeanors, or impose such fines upon them for breach of their orders as in these presents are formally expressed: And further, our will and pleasure is, and

by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, we do grant unto the said Governor and Company, and to their successors, full power and lawful authority to seize upon the persons of all such English, or any other our subjects, which shall sail into Hudson's Bay, or inhabit in any of the countries, islands or territories hereby granted to the said Governor and Company, without their leave and license, and in that behalf first had and obtained, or that shall contemn and disobey their orders, and send them to England; and that all and every person and persons, being our subjects, any ways employed by the said Governor and Company, within any the parts, places and limits aforesaid, shall be liable unto and suffer such punishment for any offences by them committed in the parts aforesaid, as the President and Council for the said Governor and Company there shall think fit, and the merit of the offence shall require, as aforesaid; and in case any person or persons being convicted and sentenced by the President and Council of the said Governor and Company, in the countries, lands or limits aforesaid, their factors or agents there, for any offence by them done, shall appeal from the same, that then and in such case it shall and may be lawful to and for the said President and Council, factors or agents, to seize upon him or them, and to carry him or them home prisoners into England, to the said Governor and Company, there to receive such condign punishment as his case shall require, and the law of this nation allow of; and for the better discovery of abuses and injuries to be done unto the said Governor and Company, or their successors, by any servant by them to be employed in the said voyages and plantations, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Governor and Company, and their respective President, Chief Agent or Governor in the parts aforesaid, to examine upon oath all factors, masters, pursers, supercargoes, commanders of castles, forts, fortifications, plantations or colonies, or other persons, touching or concerning any matter or thing in which by law or usage an oath may be administered, so as the said oath, and the matter therein contained be not repugnant, but agreeable to the laws of this realm: And we do hereby straightly charge and command all and singular our Admirals, Vice-Admirals, Justices, Mayors, Sheriffs, Constables, Bailiffs, and all and singular other our officers, ministers, liegemen and subjects whatsoever to be aiding, favouring, helping and assisting to the said Governor and Company, and to their successors, and their deputies, officers, factors, servants, assigns and ministers, and every of them, in executing and enjoying the premises, as well on land as on sea, from time to time, when any of you shall thereunto be required; any statute, act, ordinance, proviso, proclamation or restraint heretofore had, made, set forth, ordained or provided, or any other matter, cause or thing whatsoever to the contrary in anywise notwithstanding.

In witness whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made Patent.

Witness ourselves at Winchester, the second day of May, in the two-and-twentieth year of our reign.

By Writ of the Privy Seal.

PIGOTT.

It has been said that but for the Hudson's Bay Company British Columbia would not have been preserved to the British Crown. On the Imperial frontier to the far north and west the Company early established its posts, and vigorously sought to maintain them against, first, Russian, and afterwards American, aggression.



SKETCH MAP OF SOUTH-EAST ALASKA *(showing points in controversy).*

(By permission of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., publishers of the "Atlantic Monthly.")

The American purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 included a strip of the coast *(lisière de côté)* extending from north latitude 54° 40′ to the region of Mt. St. Elias. It was generally understood that this strip was separated from the British possessions by a mountain range (then believed to exist) parallel to the coast, as in event of this range being too remote, by a line parallel to the windings (sinuosities) of the coast, nowhere greater than ten marine leagues from the same.

There is nothing to lead one to suppose that the strip of coast was designed to be continuous from the parallel of 54° 40′ north latitude. The recent great development of the North-West has shown the singular value of this strip, which the American authorities, ignoring the exact possessions of the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1825, has assumed to be their territory. Recent American writers have been quick to perceive the weakness of their case, and one of these, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly*, uses this language:

"Arbitration is compromise. . . Once before a board of arbitration, the English Government has only to set up and vigorously urge all its claims, and more that can easily be invented, and *it is all but absolutely certain* that although *by tradition and equity* we should decline *to yield a foot of what we purchased* in good faith from Russia, and which has become doubly valuable to us by settlement and exploration, our *lisière* will be promptly broken into fragments, and with much show of impartiality divided between the two contracting parties." The italics are mine. Tradition and (the American idea of) equity are hardly equal to the language of a treaty negotiated so recently as 1825.*

Convention with Russia.

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, being desirous of drawing still closer the ties of good understanding and friendship which unite them, by means of an agreement which may settle, upon the basis of reciprocal convenience, different points connected with the commerce, navigation, and fisheries of their subjects on the Pacific Ocean, as well as the limits of their respective possessions on the north-west coast of America, have named plenipotentiaries to conclude a convention for this purpose, that is to say—His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the Right Hon. Stratford Canning, a member of his said Majesty's Most Hon. Privy Council, etc.; and his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, the Sieur Charles Robert Count de Nesselrode, his Imperial Majesty's Privy Councillor, a member of the Council of the Empire, Secretary of State for the Department of Foreign Affairs, etc., and the Sieur Pierre de Poletica, his Imperial Majesty's Councillor of State, etc.; who, after having communicated to each other their respective full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed upon and signed the following articles:—

Art. I.—It is agreed that the respective subjects of the high contracting parties shall not be troubled or molested, in any part of the ocean commonly called the Pacific Ocean, either in navigating the same, in fishing therein, or in landing at such parts of the coast as shall not have been already occupied, in order to trade with the natives, under the restrictions and conditions specified in the following articles.

* T. C. Mendenhall, in *Atlantic Monthly* for April, 1896.

II.—In order to prevent the right of navigating and fishing, exercised upon the ocean by the subjects of the high contracting parties, from becoming the pretext for an illicit commerce, it is agreed that the subjects of his Britannic Majesty shall not land at any place where there may be a Russian establishment, without the permission of the governor or commandant; and, on the other hand, that Russian subjects shall not land, without permission, at any British establishment on the north-west coast.

III.—The line of demarcation between the possessions of the high contracting parties, upon the coast of the continent, and the islands of America to the north-west, shall be drawn in the manner following:—Commencing from the southernmost point of the island called Prince of Wales's Island, which point lies in the parallel of 54 degrees, 40 minutes, north latitude, and between the 131st and 133rd degree of west longitude (meridian of Greenwich), the said line shall ascend to the north along the channel called Portland Channel, as far as the point of the continent where it strikes the 56th degree of north latitude; from this last-mentioned point the line of demarcation shall follow the summits of the mountains situated parallel to the coast, as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude (of the same meridian); and, finally, from the said point of intersection, the said meridian line of the 141st degree in its prolongation as far as the Frozen Ocean, shall form the limit between the Russian and British possessions on the Continent of America to the north-west.

IV.—With reference to the line of demarcation laid down in the preceding article, it is understood:—

1st: That the island called Prince of Wales's Island shall belong wholly to Russia.

2nd: That wherever the summit of the mountains which extend in a direction parallel to the coast, from the 56th degree of north latitude to the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude, shall prove to be at the distance of more than ten marine leagues from the ocean, the limit between the British possessions and the line of coast which is to belong to Russia, as above-mentioned, shall be formed by a line parallel to the windings of the coast, and which shall never exceed the distance of ten marine leagues therefrom.

V.—It is moreover agreed, that no establishment shall be formed by either of the two parties within the limits assigned by the two preceding articles to the possessions of the other; consequently, British subjects shall not form any establishment either upon the coast, or upon the border of the continent comprised within the limits of the Russian possessions as designated in the two preceding articles; and, in like manner, no establishment shall be formed by Russian subjects beyond the said limits.

VI.—It is understood that the subjects of his Britannic Majesty, from whatever quarter they may arrive, whether from the ocean or from the

interior of the continent, shall forever enjoy the right of navigating freely, and without any hindrance whatever, all the rivers and streams which in their course towards the Pacific Ocean may cross the line of demarcation upon the line of coast described in Article III of the present convention.

VII.—It is also understood, that for the space of ten years from the signature of the present convention, the vessels of the two powers, or those belonging to their respective subjects, shall mutually be at liberty to frequent without any hindrance whatever, all the inland seas, the gulfs, havens, and creeks on the coast mentioned in Article III for the purpose of fishing and of trading with the natives.

VIII.—The Port of Sitka, or Novo Archangelsk, shall be open to the commerce and vessels of British subjects for the space of ten years from the date of the exchange of the ratification of the present convention. In the event of an extension of this term of ten years being granted to any other power, the like extension shall be granted also to Great Britain.

IX.—The above-mentioned liberty of commerce shall not apply to the trade of spirituous liquors, in fire-arms or other arms, gunpowder or other warlike stores ; the high contracting parties reciprocally engaging not to permit the above-mentioned articles to be sold or delivered in any manner whatever, to the natives of the country.

X.—Every British or Russian vessel navigating the Pacific Ocean, which may be compelled by storms or by accident to take shelter in the ports of the respective parties, shall be at liberty to refit therein, to provide itself with all necessary stores, and to put to sea again, without paying any other than port and lighthouse dues, which shall be the same as those paid by national vessels. In case, however, the master of such vessel should be under the necessity of disposing of a part of his merchandise in order to defray his expenses, he shall conform himself to the regulations and tariffs of the place where he may have landed.

XI.—In every case of complaint on account of an infraction of the articles of the present convention, the civil and military authorities of the high contracting parties, without previously acting or taking any forcible measure, shall make an exact and circumstantial report of the matter to their respective courts, who engage to settle the same in a friendly manner, and according to the principles of justice.

XII.—The present convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications shall be exchanged at London, within the space of six weeks, or sooner if possible.

In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the same and have affixed thereto the seals of their arms.

Done at St. Petersburg, the 16th (28th) day of February, in the year of our Lord, 1825.

STRATFORD CANNING.
THE COUNT DE NESSELRODE.
PIERRE DE POLETICA.

GOVERNORS OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

His Highness Prince Rupert	1670-1683
H.R.H. James, Duke of York (afterwards King James II.)	1683-1685
John, Lord Churchill (afterwards Duke of Marlborough)	1685-1691
Sir Stephen Evance, Kt.	1691-1696
The Rt. Hon. Sir William Trumbull	1696-1700
Sir Stephen Evance, Kt.	1700-1712
Sir Bibye Lake, Bart.	1712-1743
Benjamin Pitt	1743-1746
Thomas Knapp	1746-1750
Sir Atwell Lake, Bart.	1750-1760
Sir William Baker, Kt.	1760-1770
Bibye Lake	1770-1782
Samuel Wegg	1782-1799
Sir James Winter Lake, Bart.	1799-1807
William Mainwaring	1807-1812
Joseph Berens, Junior	1812-1822
Sir John Henry Pelly, Bart.	1822-1852
Andrew Colville	1852-1856
John Shepherd	1856-1858
Henry Hulse Berens	1858-1863
Rt. Hon. Sir Edmund Walker Head, Bart., K.C.B.	1863-1868
Rt. Hon. The Earl of Kimberley	1868-1869
Rt. Hon. Sir Stafford H. Northcote, Bart., M.P. (Earl of Iddesleigh)	1869-1874
Rt. Hon. George Joachim Goschen, M.P.	1874-1880
Eden Colville	1880-1889
Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, G.C.M.G.	1889-

DEPUTY-GOVERNORS OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

Sir John Robinson, Kt.	1670-1675
Sir James Hayes, Kt.	1675-1685
The Hon. Sir Edward Dering, Kt.	1685-1691
Samuel Clarke	1691-1701
John Nicholson	1701-1710
Thomas Lake	1710-1711
Sir Bibye Lake, Bart.	1711-1712
Captain John Merry	1712-1729
Samuel Jones	1729-1735
Benjamin Pitt	1735-1743
Thomas Knapp	1743-1746
Sir Atwell Lake, Bart.	1746-1750
Sir William Baker, Kt.	1750-1760
Captain John Merry	1760-1765
Bibye Lake	1765-1770
Robert Merry	1770-1774
Samuel Wegg	1774-1782
Sir James Winter Lake, Bart.	1782-1799
Richard Hulse	1799-1805
Nicholas Caesar Corsellis	1805-1806
Wm. Mainwaring	1806-1807
Joseph Berens, Junior	1807-1812
John Henry Pelly	1812-1822
Nicholas Garry	1822-1835
Benjamin Harrison	1835-1839
Andrew Colville	1839-1852
John Shepherd	1852-1856
Henry Hulse Berens	1856-1858
Edward Ellice, M.P.	1858-1863
Sir Curtis Miranda Lampson, Bart.	1863-1871
Eden Colville	1871-1880
Sir John Rose, Bart., G.C.M.G.	1880-1888
Sir Donald A. Smith, G.C.M.G.	1888-1889
The Earl of Lichfield	1889-1898

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